



# CALVARY

## Calvary Culture: Schedule

### Week:

- #1 – Our Vision – Making Jesus Non-Ignorable
- #2 – Our Mission – Make Joyful, Passionate Disciples of Jesus
- #3 – Core Commitment 1 – Worship God passionately
- #4 – Core Expression 1 - Designing a Gospel-Centered Weekend Worship Experience
- #5 - Core Commitment 2 – Connect with one another authentically
- #6 – Core Expression 2 - Creating Transformational, Biblical Community Groups
- #7 - Core Commitment 3 – Grow to know God deeply
- #8 – Core Expression 3 - Making Disciples through Life-on-Life Discipleship Groups
- #9 - Core Commitment 4 – Go show and tell the Gospel boldly
- #10 – Core Expression 4 - Showing and Telling the Gospel through Strategic Mission
- #11 - Ministering Strategically to Children, Teenagers, and their Parents
- #12 – Pursuing Humble, Dependent Prayer

## Calvary Soft Launch: Curriculum

### Week #1 – Our Vision: Making Jesus Non-Ignorable

**This should not shock any of us**, but we live in a city and world full of people who are searching for life, and for joy, and for hope, and for peace, and for purpose, but they are searching for those things in people and places and things that can never truly deliver them.

*And all the while – **they are knowingly or unknowingly ignoring Jesus, the only One who can truly rescue them from sin and provide them with eternal life, joy, hope, and peace.***

- **ILL** - How many of you have ever heard of the Bocklet brothers? No? There are 3 of them that are all on a team owned by Pat Bowlen. Still don't know? Maybe because the 3 brothers (Matt, Chris, and Mike) are all lacross players on the Denver Outlaws. You may have lived in Colorado most of your life but still don't know who the Denver Outlaws are – it's our professional lacross team here. But if I ask you who Von Miller is? Many of you would recognize the name and be able to tell me that he's a Denver Bronco. You can't come to Colorado for even a weekend without hearing or seeing something about the Broncos (even in the airport!). This is what it means to be non-ignorable. The Denver Outlaws are ignorable...the Denver Broncos are non-ignorable!
- Friends, this is why at Calvary, **our vision** is really simple – by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, we desperately want:

***Calvary's Vision: To make Jesus non-ignorable in Denver and to the ends of the earth.***

**As a church**, we believe God has called us to make Jesus non-ignorable to those who are **FAR FROM HIM**, just as we once were...

...by serving them with His love, proclaiming to them His truth, and by calling them to turn from their sins and run to Him in faith, obedience, and worship.

o **This is the vision of our church and we can't ever let this vision slip away!**

o **We can't let this vision slip from our hearts and minds otherwise we will drift toward becoming a lukewarm, self-absorbed, inward-focused church that makes no real impact for the Kingdom.**

### **Bringing It Home To Us...**

1. Read Ephesians 2:13 – Paul describes the conversion process as being "far off to brought near by the blood of Christ". Think back to your

own story – when & how did Jesus become non-ignorable in your heart & life? (Have a few people share their testimonies of being far off to brought near.)

2. Maybe it's not the Broncos in our city or neighborhood, but what are a few of the things that are non-ignorable for our friends in this area?
3. Think of a close friend or neighbor who is ignoring Jesus right now, what would it look like for Jesus to become non-ignorable in their life?
4. Obviously there are helpful & non-helpful ways for Jesus to be non-ignorable to people – standing on a street corner with a sign about people going to hell is not ignorable, but also not helpful. But a church body coming alongside a school full of struggling students to help them have the things & food they need is also non-ignorable, but in a helpful way.
5. Lets think together – what would it look like for Jesus to be non-ignorable in our city?

***We pray that God would move in such a way that this city would be more passionate about Christ than the Broncos!!!***

**Week #2 – Mission: Making Joyful, Passionate Disciples of Jesus**

***So, if our vision as a church is to make Jesus non-ignorable in Denver and to the ends of the earth...the next question we need to ask is this:***

*How do we as individuals and as a church family make Jesus non-ignorable in Denver and to the ends of the earth?*

1. Here's the truth, God is on a mission to extend His glory as He saves and redeems the broken and the lost...**and Calvary He made us and saved us to join Him in that mission...**

**...to share the good news that Jesus Christ came to earth to die that sinful rebels like us might live now and forever!**

Therefore, at Calvary, our mission, the thing we are committed to, day in and day out in pursuit of our vision to make Jesus non-ignorable is...

*To glorify God by making joyful, passionate disciples of Jesus.*

- Simply put. Here is how our vision and mission connect: We will make Jesus non-ignorable as we make joyful, passionate disciples of Jesus who saturate every corner of their lives with His love and truth.

**TRANS.** - Now here's the deal, if we are to live out this mission, there is a radical Shift of thinking that must happen in each of us as followers of Jesus...here it is:

**The Shift:** We must begin to understand that as followers of Jesus, we have all been called and sent by God to be **missionary disciple-makers**, who give our lives away to make disciples, who make disciples. Not just pastors and elders and people who serve in full-time ministry or missions...We are ALL called to be God's missionaries and to make disciples of Jesus in this world.

**Turn with me to Matthew 28:19-20...**

**Context:** Here we see Jesus' last words to His followers before He ascends to heaven...these words are known as the great commission...

*<sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

**...our primary mission as a church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ...disciples that are marked by supernatural joy and passion for Christ and His glory!**

**TRANS.** - I want to very quickly point out 4 important things that we need to see here in verses 19 and 20...(Look at the text with me)

1) "Go therefore and make disciples..."

\*\*\* This is not a passive calling Jesus has given us...it is an active calling.

2) "Go therefore and **make disciples...**

- o **WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?** - *A disciple of Jesus is someone who loves and obeys Jesus and is learning to apply the gospel to absolutely every part of life.*
- o ...not just someone who gives lip service to being a follower, not someone who just goes to church on the weekends... **(DEF.)**
- o **Making disciples of Jesus begins with first being a disciple of Jesus yourself!**

Involves true humility and surrender to Jesus, repenting of sin and turning to Him in faith!

**3)** *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.": Not some, but All!*

- a. **Local AND Global missions** ...we all have a responsibility to be involved with **both** on some level.

1) **Local**: God has sovereignly placed us where we are for a reason...for mission. (Calvary, as well as our own homes/streets)

2) **Global**: Pray about how we can expand our global impact for the Kingdom both...

**...as individuals and families (mission trips, sponsoring a compassion child) and as a church.**

**4)** <sup>19</sup> *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

- o **We don't make disciples of all nations on our own strength.** We can only do this by the power of Christ within us...by the power of His Holy Spirit!

**So in light of this passage, there 2 big application questions we each need to ask:**

1. **Will I surrender to Christ's call on my life to be a disciple and a disciple-maker?**

***You and I have one life... but so does everyone else.*** Your neighbors who don't know Christ, your friends, Starbucks people, parents of kids that you know, millions and millions around the world who don't know Christ.

2. *Am I personally, and are we as a church willing to do whatever it takes to make disciples for the glory of God?* to reach the lost... kids, youth, seniors, people who don't look like you?

1) To put our preferences and our comforts aside (WHATEVER THEY ARE) in order to reach the lost with good news...

2) I pray God will continue to create a sense of urgency IN US to do whatever it takes to make Jesus non-ignorable by reaching the lost and making disciples!

Can you imagine what could happen in and through our lives? What God could do for His glory through our church? Let's dream...

### Bringing It Home To Us...

1. When you hear the word "disciple" what does it mean to you?
2. What does it look like in your life right now to be a disciple of Jesus?
3. How is making disciples different than making converts?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. What stands out to you from these verses?
5. Read verse 18 again. What are the qualifications of being given the ministry of reconciliation? (Nothing!) As soon as we are reconciled to God, He uses us to reach other people! How does this make you feel to know that you don't have to go to seminary or be a missionary to be a disciple maker?

**Week #3 – Core Commitment 1 – Worship God Passionately**

**REVIEW:**

***Vision: We exist to make Jesus non-ignorable in Denver and to the ends of the earth.***

***Mission: To glorify God by making joyful, passionate disciples of Jesus.***

For the next few weeks we will be looking at how we as a church and as individuals are called to make Jesus non-ignorable through the making of disciples.

- o And we don't have to come up with a bunch of ideas as to how to do this...**we just need to go to God's Word.** He has told us how He wants us to glorify Him and make disciples.
- o We express this at Calvary through our 4 Core Commitments: ***Worship, Connect, Grow, Go***
- o Today we are going to be talking about what it means to ***Worship God Passionately.***

**1. I've heard it said that we are not changed by whole books.** We are changed by sentences and paragraphs in books. This has been true in my life.

- I want to share one of those sentences with you that has had a profound impact on my life as we begin this morning. It comes from John Piper's book, "Let the Nations be Glad."

*"Missions is not the ultimate goal of the Church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man."* – John Piper

2. Last week we talked about the mission of our church, which is *“to make joyful passionate disciples of Jesus.”* We desire to make disciples from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth!

3. But the truth is, this type of mission work is not an end in itself...it is actually a means to the ultimate end, which is the worship of our great God!

- This is what Piper means when he says, *“Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is.”*

And so, if we are to be a truly biblical church, a church that honors and glorifies the Lord in the ways He has called us to, then we must understand that #1 thing God desires of His people, of His church, **is to be worshipped!**

TRANS - This morning we are going to be considering 3 important questions pertaining to the kind of passionate worship the Lord desires in our lives and in our church:

- 1) What does it mean to worship God passionately?
- 2) What does it look like to worship God passionately (both individually and corporately)?
- 3) How do we become passionate worshippers of God?

**Question #1: What does it mean to worship God passionately?**

ILL – Imagine having a conversation with a non-Christian friend who has been checking out our church...asks you, “What is worship...what does it mean to worship?”

*How would you answer your friend? How does the Bible answer?*

Open your Bibles with me if you would to Romans, chapter 11, verse 36...we will be looking at 11:36-12:1...

1) These two verses help give us a foundational and basic understanding definition of worship according to God and according to Scripture...**as we look at these verses, there are 3 important theological terms we need to define and unpack a little bit...**

In Romans 11:36 – 12: 1 we read...

<sup>36</sup> For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the **glory** forever! Amen. <sup>1</sup> Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to **offer** your bodies as living **sacrifices**, holy and pleasing to God-- this is your spiritual act of worship.

**3 Characteristics of Worship that we see in these verses are 1) Glory, 2) Offer, and 3) Sacrifice.**

1. **Glory** – Comes from the Greek word “Doxa” literally meaning *Glory or Praise*.
  - 1) To glory in something means praising something because of **it’s supreme value and significance...**
  - 2) it the person or thing or affiliation that **you cherish above all else...**it is preeminent in your life, most significant to you...**it is your treasure...**
  - 4) the decisions you make in your life, the values you hold are guided and shaped by this person or thing **you GLORY in.**

**2. Offer (Dedicate)** –

- 1) We then offer or dedicate ourselves to this person or thing... we are committed to this person or thing...**we are ALL IN!**
- 2) What this looks like in our culture...is that we wear a t-shirt, buy a bumper sticker...we align ourselves with a certain tribe of people if you will...a group or tribe of people who are devoted to this certain person or thing or cause.
- 3) We present ourselves, commit ourselves, dedicate ourselves to this person or thing. We **PUBLICALLY DECLARE** that we are aligned with this person or thing.

*So, there is GLORY, that person or thing to which we are most committed, there is then OFFERING or DEDICATING, where we publically declare that we are aligned with this person or thing...*

*Thirdly, there is sacrifice...*

**3. Sacrifice** –

- 1) Our dedication to this person or thing **naturally leads us to make sacrifices for it.**
- 2) Sacrifices that typically come in the form of us **giving** our talents, our time, and our treasures (or money) to this person or thing.
- 3) In so doing, we are making a statement about what is most important to us in our life. We make sacrifices for it...because it is **glorious** to us!

**Now, how should these three characteristics of worship translate into our understanding of what it means to worship God?**

*(Both individually and corporately?)*

1) **To “Glory” in God** means we desire for our lives to bring HIM praise and point others to Him!

- It means we cherish God, we love God, we treasure God above all other things in our lives and in this world.
- We seek to bring Him glory!!!

2) **To “Offer” or “Dedicate” ourselves to God** means we **PUBLICALLY DECLARE** that we are aligned with Him

- We are dedicated to Him! We offer ourselves completely to Him for His purposes! We are all in and want give all we are to Him.

2) **To “Sacrifice” for God means** we are willing to surrender to Him. To make sacrifices for Him and for His purposes!

- Our wants and desires in life are constantly submitted to His wants and desires.
- ...and it is our joy to sacrifice for Him because ultimately He sacrificed His very Son to give us salvation!

**TRANS.** - These 3 characteristics of worship FORM the heart of our first core commitment....

**Core Commitment #1: Worship God Passionately**

**Question #2: What does it look like to worship God passionately (both individually and corporately)?**

### **7 Marks of Passionate Worship of God**

*Jeremiah 29:13 - You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*

#### **#1. God-focused**

*Psalm 115:1: Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness!*

**1) Passionate worship of God starts with a focus on Him!** Who He is...in all of His beauty and holiness and grace and majesty!

**2) Worship is about God and for God first and foremost.** Yes, we are fed and blessed and edified through worship, but only to the extent that our worship is God-focused and not self-focused.

- ...this helps us to assume the correct posture in worship... ***"Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory..."***

\*\*\*Bringing glory to God is the primary purpose of true worship, for He ALONE is worthy of our worship!!!

***\*\*\*Practically, as a church, this is why the songs we sing, the prayers we pray, the sermons we preach, the offering we give, and the communion we take...must always be God-focused and not self-focused!***

***\*\*\*Our worship must be God-focused for God's glory!!***

## **#2. Cross-centered**

Many people are into God...the problem is that there are many different ideas of who God is...as Christians we believe that Jesus is central to knowing who God REALLY is...we believe Jesus was God who came in the flesh, to earth, to reconcile us to God. You are going to hear about Jesus a lot in here ... in preaching, in music, in prayer, through communion...because we believe that

### **Verse 2...**

In Christ alone! who took on flesh  
Fullness of God in helpless babe!  
This gift of love and righteousness  
Scorned by the ones he came to save:

Till on that cross as Jesus died,  
The wrath of God was satisfied -  
For every sin on Him was laid;  
Here in the death of Christ I live.

- 1) Only because of the cross do we have are forgiven, are reconciled to God...
- 2) Only because of the cross of Jesus can we "approach the throne of grace with confidence"...**and worship Him in Spirit and Truth for His glory and our joy!!!----OUR WORSHIP MUST BE CROSS-CENTERED!!!**

## **#3. Truth-saturated**

- 1) **In the Gospel of John**, we see the passage in John 4 where Jesus is talking to a Samaritan woman and He says to here in John 4:23..."a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

- 2) Jesus us saying that our worship must be saturated in Biblical truth. We must know God for who He is in TRUTH.

#### #4. Spirit-filled

- But it is not enough for our worship to just be truth-saturated, Jesus is saying here that our worship must also be Spirit-filled.

#### Listen to how James Macdonald puts it...(p.184-185 of Vertical Church)

---Our Worship must be: TRUTH-SATURATED AND SPIRIT FILLED!

#### #5. Awe-producing

1) "The book of Hebrews is particularly important here because it shows the connection between the worship of the Old Testament and the worship of the New Testament, and also because it draws attention to the uniqueness of our worship as the New Testament people of God." Robert Godfrey (pastor in CA)

#### **Hebrews 12:28-29:**

*Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.*

2) As we worship the Lord for who He is in all of His righteousness and holiness, the result will be **reverence and awe before Him!**

#### **\*\*\*The Psalms show us this all over the place:**

*Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth. (Ps. 96:9)*

*The LORD reigns, let the nations tremble; he sits enthroned between the cherubim, let the earth shake. Great is the LORD in Zion; he is exalted over all the nations. Let them praise your great and awesome name — he is holy. The King is mighty, he loves justice — you have established equity; In Jacob you have done what is just and right. Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his foot stool; he is holy. (Ps. 99:1-5)*

Robert Godfrey – "At times in worship there must be serious, sober reflection. As we meet with the God who created heaven and earth, who gave the Law at Mount Sinai, and who poured out his wrath against sin on his Son at Calvary, we must be filled with reverent awe. **We should quite literally be awestruck when we**

**come into God's presence in worship.** Real reverence is never stodgy or dull but is profound and moving.

Today these two responses, joy and reverence, are frequently set in opposition to one another. One kind of worship is called joyful, uplifting, and exuberant, while another kind is called reverent, sedate, respectful. However, in the Scriptures joy and reverence are not antithetical but always complementary. **Worship can be joyfully reverent and reverently joyful.** Joy and reverence should always be united in our worship."

*Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. (Ps. 2:11)*

*The LORD reigns, let the earth be glad; let the distant shores rejoice. Clouds and thick darkness surround him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne. Fire goes before him and consumes his foes on every side. His lightning lights up the world; the earth sees and trembles. . Zion hears and rejoices and the villages of Judah are glad because of your judgments, O LORD. (Ps. 97:1-4, 8)*

*He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever — holy and awesome is his name. (Ps. 111:9)*

**This combination of joy and awe may not always be easy to achieve, but it must be our goal.**

**Question:** *Does your worship lead you to a place of reverence and awe of the God? If not, Why?*

## **#6. Joy-infused**

1) The Lord does not NEED us to worship Him. This is important to understand. No, God as Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit **share between themselves perfect love and fullness of joy...**

...there is no internal "need" for creatures to love God in return.

***So why does God invite us and even command us to worship Him?***

The ultimate reason God created us and calls us to worship Him is not to help fill some kind of personal lack or need, **but to share his infinite love and joy and delight! God wants our joy!**

**As Tim Keller writes:** *"God made us to ever increasingly share in his own joy and delight in the same way he has joy and delight within himself. We share his joy as we give him glory, worshipping and serving him rather than ourselves. Biblical commands to worship God, then, rather than a burdensome duty, are intended to guide humanity on the path toward their greatest good and delight."*

## 2) We see this throughout the Psalms:

*Sing for joy to God our strength; Shout aloud to the God of Jacob!(Ps. 81:1)*

*Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. (Ps. 95:1-2)*

*Serve the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. (Ps. 100:2)*

*For you make me glad by your deeds, O LORD; I sing for joy at the works of your hands. (Ps. 92:4)*

Our response to God ought to be one of great joy and gladness for the saving work of Jesus. ***Joy and thankfulness increasingly saturate the heart of a GROWING, passionate worshipper.***

## #7. Church-edified

- 1) By this I mean that in true worship the church is built up. The people of God are edified and built up! **The church grows into greater maturity.**
- 2) It is transformed into a greater likeness of Jesus Christ whose body it is. **Worship should be something that changes us and how we live.**
- 3) **The book of Acts** demonstrates that when the church is truly worshipping the Lord, then it is built up...Christians grow in maturity and the lost are saved!!!
- 4) **When a church is truly worshipping the Lord,** then it will be edified and the results will be felt even in the surrounding community.
  - **If the corporate worship in the church leaves people unchanged, then the church is not really worshipping.**
  - **Hebrews 10:24,25** tells us that we are to meet together to "*spur one another on to love and good deeds.*"

**Bottom line is this:** True worship results in life transformation, and the church is edified by that. If transformation is not taking place, then you may have a religious service, you may have a wonderful, emotional social gathering, but you do not have worship.

**Review-**Passionate Worship is 1) God-focused, 2) Cross-centered, 3) Truth-Saturated, 4) Spirit-filled, 5) Awe-producing, 6) Joy-infused and 7) Church-edified...

**Question #3: How do we become passionate worshippers of God?**

It is God's DESIRE that we worship Him with all that we are.

***This is what we were created for!!! To GLORY IN Him, to DEDICATE ourselves TO HIM, and to SACRIFICE FOR Him...with our entire lives. This is what it means to worship our God.***

1) If we are to be these kinds of worshippers, then it begins with us humbling ourselves and surrendering to Jesus as Lord and Savior again or for the very first time...**it begins there.**

2) **We cannot be the kinds of worshippers we have been talking about this morning** apart from the life changing power and work of Jesus Christ through His death and resurrection.

- *Only through Christ can we move from being worshippers of self and the world to worshippers of God.*

3) **Some of us have been worshipping other things**...giving glory, dedication, and sacrifice on a level that only God deserves.

- ...and this morning we need to name that and confess that to the Lord and repent.

### **Bringing It Home To Us...**

1. We talked about the characteristics of worship being glory, offer & sacrifice...think back to when you were a teenager. In a way, many of us worshipped something in that time. What was it for you & can you apply what it looked like to glory in that, offer yourself towards it, and sacrifice for it? (Maybe it was a band or musician, maybe it was a sports team or celebrity, maybe it was a restaurant, etc.)
2. Would you say your worship of God is marked by these 3 characteristics? Why or why not?
3. When we look at the 7 marks of passionate worship of God, how do you see these playing out in a corporate worship service? What happens if some of these marks aren't present, without mentioning any churches by names, give an example of what a church service might look like that is lacking in some of these areas.
4. We have talked a lot about what it looks like to be a worshipper of God...let's close our time by reminding ourselves why we worship God. As a group, go around & finish this sentence...*"Lord, You are worthy of our worship because..."*

## Week #4 – Core Expression 1 - Designing a Gospel-Centered Weekend Worship Experience

**A Gospel-Centered Weekend Worship Experience is:** *A worship experience that is shaped by, and points to, the gracious reality of what Jesus accomplished through His life, death, and resurrection for sinners.*

### 3 Essential Ingredients to a Gospel-Centered Weekend Worship Experience

#### #1: Gospel-Drenched Hospitality

##### Cultural Characteristics of Gospel-Drenched Hospitality:

##### #1: Initiating

- *Key Phrase: You pursue!*
  - Don't wait for people to come in & take the first step – meet them outside, greet them & anticipate their needs. Take initiative to get to know them & learn their name.

##### #2: Embracing

- *Key Phrase: All are welcome.*
  - Being a Prodigal Hugging Church!

##### #3: Personal

- *Key Phrase: Individual care.*
  - Help people connect individually to the church – if it's a young mom with kids, make sure you show her where the nursery is & introduce her to the children's pastor. Don't view all guests as being the same.
  - One thing we do at Calvary Church is that we take attendance – in other churches it's easy for people to come & go without anyone ever noticing them, but we want to shepherd individuals, so we take

attendance of everyone at every service so that we can better follow up on them & care for them.

#### #4: Genuine

- *Key Phrase: Joyfully authentic.*
  - We want church to be a place where people can take off their masks & feel safe being known. But it starts with us. If we feel like we can't be genuine or joyfully authentic, why? How do we change it?

#### #5: Knowledgeable

- *Key Phrase: Know the church.*
  - Know the building & the people in it! Be able to welcome people & take them where they need to go (children's ministry, restrooms, etc.)
  - Know the people in the church & be thinking of how you can connect this new person to another person at the church (maybe they are someone who has lived overseas & just moved to the area – is there someone that could relate to that who you could introduce them to?)

#### #6: Prayerful

- *Key Phrase: Pray with and for people.*
  - Pray continually for the morning, and as people share needs with you, stop and pray for them right there instead of just saying "I'll be praying for you this week."

#### #7: Persistent

- *Key Phrase: Don't give up.*
  - It takes time to create this kind of culture & a lot of people aren't comfortable with it at first, but don't give up! As more of us continue to live out hospitality in this way, it will become more normal for us!

**Structural Characteristics of Gospel-Drenched Hospitality:**

**#1: A Prepared Team:** *A group of people who are equipped to carry out the vision of Gospel-Drenched Hospitality.*

**#2: An Inviting Facility:** *A facility that is accessible, clean, and safe.*

**#3: Clear Communication:** *People know where they are supposed to go and what they are supposed to do.*

- Signage
- Greeters giving directions
- Don't assume people know anything!

**#4: A "Knowing" Game-plan:** *A strategic game-plan to connect with and care for people with Gospel love and grace.*

**#5: Integration Strategy:** *A plan to get people connected with the church and living out Gospel-Drenched Hospitality.*

## #2: Gospel-Shaped Worship

### 7 Essential Elements to a Gospel-Shaped Worship Service:

Element #1: Gospel Singing

Element #2: Gospel Giving (tithes and offerings)

Element #3: Gospel Preaching (Christ-centered preaching)

Element #4: Gospel Repenting (1) Acknowledging my sin before God while turning to Jesus alone for my forgiveness and justification. 2) Preparing my heart for the Lord's Supper

Element #5: Gospel Remembering (Lord's Supper)

Element #6: Gospel Responding (call to action: recommitment, need to forgive someone and talk to them, need to go lead something, need to be baptized, etc.)

Element #7: Gospel Going (Leaving as Gospel missionaries to our community)

### #3: Gospel-Driven Mission

**Gospel-Driven Mission:** *Being sent out as missionaries to make Jesus and His Gospel non-ignorable to a lost and broken world.*

- *Leaving the church gathered as the church scattered.*

#### The Congregation is sent out on Gospel-Mission to:

#1: Invest in others.

#2: Invite others into biblical community.

#3: Introduce others to know Jesus.

#### Bringing It Home To Us...

1. We talked about Gospel drenched hospitality – what are some practical steps for us as a church to make this a reality?
  - a. What are 2 things we are doing well already?
  - b. What are 2 things we need to improve on?
2. When we think of the structural characteristics of an inviting facility and clear communication, let's think through our building from the perspective of a first time visitor. What would be our top 3 priorities in order to make our facility more inviting and communication clearer?
3. When we talk about a game plan for knowing people and getting them integrated into the church, how important is this? Can you think of a place in society where this is done well? (Think through characteristics of an elementary student transferring to a new school, or an adult joining a new gym)
4. Review the 3 elements to Gospel Mission (Invest, Invite, Introduce). We will expand more on this in a few weeks, but right now, think of 3 people you can be praying for & taking these steps with in your own life!

Week #5 - Core Commitment 2 – Connect with One Another Authentically

Puzzle Illustration

*How many of you enjoy doing puzzles?*

- What are some of the things we know about puzzles?
  - There's a ton of pieces. They all look different.
  - Each piece on its own is a little weird... you can't really tell what it is.
- But when the whole puzzle is together, *it is a beautiful picture.*

**\*\*\*The same is true of the Church.** *We are each individuals and when we come together as a unified picture, it's beautiful!*

1) The Bible paints a picture for us of what this beautiful, unified picture looks like...look with me...

*Acts 2:42-47 - "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had*

*need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved."*

- **This is a vision of what the church can be when we are devoted to the Lord.** When we are serious about being who God has called us to be.
- **This is a picture of what the Gospel does to communities.** We are a people transformed by the Gospel inwardly, and that has outward effects.

You see, ***WE WEREN'T DESIGNED TO DO LIFE ALONE!***

*God designed us to be in real, authentic relationship with one another from the very beginning, and this reflects the Trinity...the Father, Son, Holy Spirit relate to one another!*

*God designed our process of sanctification and growth with a corporate component (you cannot do it alone)*

**2) This is why we see so many "one another's" throughout Scripture.** The "one another" commands that we see throughout Scripture are the means by which we grow as a loving community.

- Did you know there are 59 "one another" commands in the New Testament. ***Let me share just a handful of these...and imagine what a church would like that is continually putting these into practice?***
  - "...Love one another..." (John 13:34)
  - "...Be at peace with each other." (Mark 9:50)
  - "...Honor one another above yourselves. (Romans 12:10)
  - "Live in harmony with one another..." (Romans 12:16)
  - "...Stop passing judgment on one another." (Romans 14:13)
  - "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you..." (Romans 15:7)
  - "...Instruct one another." (Romans 15:14)
  - "...Have equal concern for each other." (1 Corinthians 12:25)
  - "...Serve one another in love." (Galatians 5:13)
  - "Carry each other's burdens..." (Galatians 6:2)

"...Be patient, bearing with one another in love." (Ephesians 4:2)

"Be kind and compassionate to one another..." (Ephesians 4:32)

"...In humility consider others better than yourselves." (Philippians 2:3)

"...Encourage each other..." I Thessalonians 5:11)

I don't know about you, but a church that seeks to care for one another like that I want to be part of and **give my life to!**

And this is the kind of church God has called us to be in His Word!

*This is what a church looks like when it is marked by **transformational, biblical community!***

**Today...how do we create transformational, biblical community in a church revitalization context?**

### ***Threats to Transformational, Biblical Community***

1. Consumer mindset.
2. Lack of commitment.
3. Busyness.
4. Shame.
  - Wearing masks
5. Individualism.
  - Don't see need to doing life with others, not letting other people in
6. Lack of understanding of what Biblical community is and how it is lived out.
7. No vision from church leadership for growing in community as a church.
8. Lack of authenticity from church leadership.

- Leader sets the tone for what's expected in a group.

9. Accepting some people, while excluding others.

### Bringing It Home To Us...

1. In our society, individualism is highly valued and we spend a lot of our lives trying to gain our independence and then eventually raise children to be independent. How does this compare to what we read in Acts 2?
2. Biblical community is different than what many people have experienced. Look over the list of "one anothers" again and let's imagine some real life situations of what this looks like to put these into practice in our town. (Remember, we don't want to create a bunch of programs, but rather be people who are always thinking of one another!)
3. Look again at the list of threats to Biblical community – are some of these more prevalent in our community than others? (Maybe in urban areas people are busier than in rural areas where life is slower, churches that have been small for a long time can often feel hard to break into & be accepted, etc.)
4. Look again at Acts 2:47 – God uses authentic Biblical community to reveal Himself to non-believers. Let's take time tonight to pray for God to cultivate this deep community in our church so that others are drawn to God through it!

<i>The 3 Focuses of Transformational, Biblical Community Groups</i>
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### **#1: Upward focus**

1) *Learning from God's Word together*

- Spending time in God's Word together through sermon-based discussion.

2) *Sharing the ways God is at work in our lives*

- Asking questions that help people to recognize the ways God is working in, through, and around them.

3) *Praying for one another, for your church, and for the world*

- Taking time to write down people's prayer requests each week, and emailing them out to the group members to be praying for that week. Sharing these with pastors & elders as necessary.
- Taking time each week to pray for one another.

### **#2: Inward Focus**

1) *Sharing a weekly meal with one another*

- Making this a priority because Biblically, meals are central to fellowship among Christians.
- Communicating with community group members to make sure everyone is able to contribute to the meal each week.
- Being intentional about including everyone in conversations during dinner.

2) *Doing life together as a church family*

- Sharing joys and burdens with each other.
- Building relationships that go beyond weekly group meetings and trying to invest in one another.

- Examples: having a surprise birthday party or baby shower for group members one week during community group; going to a group member's kid's game

3) *Caring for one another in tangible ways*

- Taking note of specific needs that community group members may have and making sure that they are followed up on.
- Examples: coordinating meals (for sick families, new parents, etc.); helping out with specific needs (childcare, food, lawn work, etc.)

### **#3: Outward Focus**

1) *Inviting the disconnected to connect*

- Creating an environment that is welcoming to new people (before the group starts, during the meal, during the conversation, after the group, & follow up). Helping to engage others that were invited by group members.

2) *Investing in others together through missional living*

- Encouraging one another and celebrating with one another as we seek to live our daily lives as missionaries in our city.

3) *Serving the Community Group's neighborhood together monthly*

- Recognizing the importance and the power of serving alongside one another as a body of Christ.
- Communicating the necessary details and doing whatever it takes to help everyone in the group feel ownership of this outreach event.

<b><i>8 Marks of a Transformational, Biblical Community Group Gathering:</i></b>
--

- We have all been part of different types of Community groups...and we have probably loved each of them but some were more transformational than others.
- What makes a Community Group transformational?

1. **The Leaders are prepared and excited to lead the group each week.**
2. **Love for God and love for people is the #1 priority and the #1 reality.**
  - Warmth

3. Discussion is Word-Driven.

4. Isolation is impossible.

5. Encouragement is excessive.

6. Invitation is ongoing.

John 1:40-42 - Andrew, Peter's brother, inviting him to meet Jesus.

Train your group to think invitationally. Spend time talking about who could be invited. Identify strategic times to invite, and plan as a group for those opportunities. Be ready each week for visitors – don't be surprised or unprepared for first time visitors!

7. Atmosphere is both intergenerational and "kid contagious."

8. Prayer is a priority.

- Both in the group and throughout the week

### Bringing It Home To Us...

1. When we think about the 3 focuses of community groups (upward, inward, outward) what would a group look like if one of these focuses was missing?
2. Sharing a meal together is a priority, but sometimes can be awkward getting to know new people. Let's take a few minutes to brainstorm together some good questions that we can ask to get to know people. Now let's brainstorm some that we can ask to take a conversation a little bit deeper.
3. If we are focused on inviting the disconnected to connect to the group, let's put ourselves in their shoes – if you are a first time visitor, when might you feel most out of place? (examples: during down time between meal & study, when everyone else knows routines & instructions aren't given)
4. As we finish up each semester of community group, we should be asking ourselves "is this neighborhood any different because our group has been here all semester?" Let that shape our planning of ways to serve the neighborhood – let's brainstorm some ideas now. (examples: block party, raking leaves, snow shoveling, changing batteries in peoples' smoke alarms, yard project for elderly neighbor or single mom).

## Week #7 - Core Commitment 3 – Grow to know God Deeply

**I'm going to begin by making a broad statement:** growth is a sign of health. There are exceptions where things grow that are not healthy, tumors or cancer for instance. *However, broadly speaking, growth is a sign of health.*

- **Think of our Lawns** - if a lawn is healthy it grows. If you don't water it properly, it dries up and dies.
- **The same is true with People** - Growth is a sign of a healthy human. When you take babies in for checkups, doctors make sure they are growing, it is a sign of health. If we don't get the nourishment we need, we will wither away.
- **The same is true for us spiritually.** Growth is a sign of our spiritual health. If you are not, or have not been growing in your faith, that is a sign that something needs to change.

**\*\*\*God desires for us to grow, and the Bible speaks to this.** The Lord desires to **grow** us into the image of Jesus.

- There are many passages that speak about spiritual growth and we're going to look at a few of them. **So let's look at 3 practical reasons WHY we must grow in faith.**

- **It helps us persevere through the storms of life.**

*Turn to Matthew 7:24-27 - **24** "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. **26** And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. **27** And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."*

1) Jesus compares people **to houses**, and what we believe (evidenced by our actions) is **the foundation** of our house.

- **Now, what are the storms in this illustration?** The storms are things that come that will threaten you, threaten to destroy you. The things that you didn't expect!

2) **When you lose your job, find out you have cancer, when a loved one dies — and some of you are here right now — what is going to keep you standing?** Not the wisdom of the world, that's the flimsy sandy foundation. It will crumble, it won't hold up.

- **No, God must be our foundation, He is our rock** — we must stand on Him, and who He tells us He is in Scripture. He is our rock, His wisdom is our foundation.

So, when we "grow to know God deeply," what we are doing is continually building that strong foundation on the rock, so that we will find ourselves strongly prepared for the trials that come in life.

A 2<sup>nd</sup> reason why we must grow in our faith...

- **It leads to bearing fruit.**

*John 15:4-5 --- "4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*

1) **Jesus is saying He is the vine and we are the branches of that vine...**

- Each of us produce fruit — think about what fruit you produce — Jesus says only as we abide in Him will we be healthy and produce the kind of fruit that glorifies him in our lives.
- Scripture tells us what this good fruit looks like: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control (Galatians

5:22-23).

2) What you do in your life, how you treat people, how you react to difficult things, these things all tell people who you are on the inside.

- If we want to produce good fruit, we need to ensure we are a healthy growing branch that abides in Jesus!!!
  
- **So our job is keep your eyes on the vine. Stay connected to the vine!** As we abide in Jesus, keep our focus always on Him, keep ourselves firmly in Him just like the branch connected to the tree, Jesus makes sure we remain healthy and through Him fruit is produced in us.

A 3<sup>rd</sup> reason why we must grow in our faith...

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>It leads to loving God.</b></li></ul> |
|--|

Luke 10:27 - *And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind,*

From this verse we see 3 areas in which we must love God and these are 3 areas that every disciple of Jesus must continually be growing in:

**Head** – (the "mind") we need to grow in our knowledge of God, and our understanding of who He is and who we are.

Rom. 12:2 - *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind"*

**Heart** ("heart and soul") - as we learn the things of God... who God is, who we are, how He sees the world... the work of God's spirit begins to change our hearts...our desires...our affections...

Ezekiel 36:26 - *"And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."*

**Hands** ("strength") - as this transformation happens, as knowing flows into believing, it results in action. The transforming work that God does in His people **MUST** result in outward expression. **It changes what we do.**

James 2:15 - *"What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?"*

ILL. - Think about being a sports fan. Knowledge of the Broncos flows into loving the Broncos, which flows into doing the things a Broncos fan does. What if you met someone who knew everything about the Broncos, and they told you they loved the Broncos and wanted them to win, but every weekend they wore Raiders jerseys and only watched Raiders' games?

You would have reason to doubt if they really believe what they say they do about the Broncos.

**It only makes sense that what we know, changes what we believe, which leads to different action.**

- James 2:17 - *"Faith without works is dead."*

\*\*\*If you have the knowledge of God, and you believe it because the Spirit of God has applied it to your heart, it will change everything about your life. ***You will not do things the same way anymore.***

**We want to be a church that takes growth in the Lord seriously.**

### Bringing It Home To Us...

1. We looked at Matthew 7, talking about building a house on a strong foundation so that we can persevere through the storms of life. What are some of the things, besides Jesus, that we are tempted to build our foundation on? How can we grow so that our foundation is on Christ alone?
2. In order to bear fruit, John 15 tells us we must abide in Jesus. What does this mean and what does it look like in our lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
3. When we look at Luke 10:27, and think about loving God with our head, heart, and hands, how does this play out in your life? Do you feel like your love for God is across all 3 of those areas?
4. What is one area that you feel like you need to grow in as a disciple of Christ? How can we, as a community group, best help each other to grow?

## Week #8 – Core Expression 3 - Making Disciples through Life-on-Life Discipleship Groups

**Called to make disciples – Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20 –** *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

**Paul in Colossians 1:28-29 -** *Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.*

At Calvary, we call these DNA discipleship groups.

### Individual and Congregational Benefits of Discipleship Groups

Here are a few of the things we gain by making friends across generations:

- Friendships are formed.
- Wisdom is gained.
- Spiritual growth is experienced.
- Trust is built.
- Unity is experienced.
- God is glorified.

### 4 Keys for Effective Discipleship Groups

1. Each group member must be willing to lean into the awkward.
2. Each group member must be adequately prepared and fully engaged.
3. Each group member must speak and listen with humility, grace, and selflessness.
4. Each group member must remain faithful and committed.

**Groups Seek to Help One Another Grow in the 6 Following Areas of Christian Discipleship:**

1. Private and corporate Worship
2. Knowledge of and love for the Word and the Gospel
3. Purposeful and passionate Prayer
4. Intergenerational Friendships
5. Doctrinal Foundations
6. Missional and evangelistic convictions

### **3 Primary Ingredients for Transformation in Discipleship Groups**

#### #1: The Primary Message: **The Gospel**

- In every meeting together, we want to speak & live out the Gospel with each other – being real about sin and real about grace.

#### #2: The Primary Tool: **The Bible**

- Our main study will be the Bible every week, letting God speak to us through His word to transform us to be more like Christ.

#### #3: The Primary Power: **The Holy Spirit**

- We cannot change on our own efforts alone, and we cannot convict each other – we know that the Holy Spirit is at work in each of us & we want to help each other recognize this and submit to that working.

### **7 Steps For Launching And Leading A Discipleship Group**

#### Step #1: Count the Cost

- Make sure that each member understands the time commitment & is willing to be vulnerable & put effort into the group.

#### Step #2: Prayerfully select your Group

- God ordains our groups many times in ways that we could not imagine, using people who are very different than us to shape us to be more like Him. Be in prayer throughout this process.

#### Step #3: Cast Vision

- As you share the vision for DNA groups, cast the vision wide so that people from all walks of life have an opportunity to join one.

#### Step #4: Develop and Communicate the Plan

- DNA groups are a vital piece to seeing discipleship happen in individuals' lives so we want to take seriously a plan to pursue people & get them plugged in to solid groups.

#### Step #5: Encourage like Crazy!

- Like any new thing in life, it may be awkward at first and take time to build relationships. Encourage each other as group leaders and participants to keep pressing in to this accountability and fellowship!

#### Step #6: Persevere by God's Grace

- Just as new habits take time to feel normal and produce results, progress in a DNA group may feel slow at times. But even in those times, God is at work – we just recently heard of a small group of ladies that had been working through the Bible verse by verse in their weekly meetings...and it took them 15 years to finish! God's work is more like a crock pot than an microwave, but the results are eternal!

#### Step #7: Rest in God's Sovereignty

- God is in control of who is in your group and what the conversations look like each week! Don't put too much pressure on yourselves to make the group look like your expectations, but rather, be sensitive to the work & leading of the Holy Spirit & allow God's will to be done in & through your group in each season.

### **The Basic Expectations for a Discipleship Group**

#1: Meet regularly and consistently.

#2: Prepare for meetings by completing each lesson in the selected study.

#3: Be honest with and accountable to each other.

#4: Pray for and encourage one another.

### Bringing It Home To Us...

1. Discipleship isn't a common word in our culture, but we actually see it happening every day around us. Think back to when you were growing up and learned a new skill through an apprenticeship (maybe formal or informal). What was the skill, who taught you & what made it work? (examples: my grandma teaching me how to bake, dad teaching me how to fix cars)

2. Read together Colossians 1:9-12. If this was Paul's prayer for his congregations and disciples, let's talk through how we can partner with the Holy Spirit to see this happening in our small DNA discipleship groups.
3. We have talked a lot about elements of an effective DNA discipleship group. What are some other informal things that we need to keep in mind in these types of groups? (examples confidentiality, no gossip, following through when people ask for accountability)
4. Last week we talked about abiding in Christ and being led by the Holy Spirit as we grow in our individual lives...what does this look like in a DNA discipleship group of 3-4 people?

<b>Week #9 - Core Commitment 4 – Go Show and Tell the Gospel Boldly</b>
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***Why must we as a church go show and tell the Gospel boldly? 8 Reasons:***

**1. Jesus commands and commissions believers to share the Gospel with the world.**

- Before he ascended to heaven, Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations" - Matthew 28:19.
- The Apostle Paul to the Ephesian Elders: However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace. - Acts 20:24
- When we share the gospel, we are obeying Jesus' command and pursuing the Great Commission he gave us:

*19 On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." 20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. 21 Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." - John 20:19-21*

**2. Jesus is the only way of salvation.**

- There is only one way a person can be saved and it is through faith and trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

*“Jesus told him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’” – John 14:6*

**3. Churches that are passionate about evangelism tend to be more outward focused.**

- We must shift our focus from self to others.

**4. The healthiest churches grow through evangelistic growth, not simply transfer growth.**

*46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. – Acts 2:46-47*

**5. When a church begins to focus on reaching the lost, it sparks a renewed passion for intercessory prayer.**

**6. When believers evangelize the lost, it forces them to grow in their ability to clearly articulate and communicate biblical and theological truth.**

**7. A church experiences growing unity as they partner together in the spread of the Gospel.**

*32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. 33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. – Acts 4:32-33*

**8. God is honored and glorified when His people proclaim the Gospel through personal evangelism.**

*14 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do*

*people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. - Matthew 5:14-16*

### Bringing It Home To Us...

1. Right now in our city/state/country, there are more unchurched people than ever before, but studies are showing that people are interested in and open to talking about God. Take a minute to think about the people you interact with on a daily basis – neighbors, co-workers, friends...are they believers walking with Christ? Are these statistics about the unchurched supported by your life & our town?
2. When we hear the word evangelism, we often are a little intimidated, but we are natural evangelists for many other things. Think about your life & tell us something that you have been a natural evangelist about (restaurant, technological gadget, vacation spot, etc). How did you feel as an evangelist of this thing (even though you probably didn't call yourself that)? Was it a burden or a joy to tell people about this?
3. Our core commitment talks about showing and telling the Gospel boldly – why is it important to balance this with both sides of mission? What happens if our focus is off balance?
4. What are some ways that you as an individual are effectively showing & telling the Gospel boldly? What are ways that you could improve?
5. What are some ways that we as a body are effectively showing & telling the Gospel boldly? What are some ways that we could improve?

Week #10 – Core Expression 4 - Showing and Telling the Gospel through Strategic Mission

*How do we mobilize people for strategic, relational evangelism?*

***3 ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS:***

***#1: PRAYER*** - *Praying that hearts would be broken for the lost.*

***#2: STRATEGY*** – *Developing a simple, clear, and doable strategy for mobilizing the congregation in evangelism.*

***#3: IMPLEMENTATION*** – *Leading the congregation to effectively implement the evangelism strategy, making it part of the DNA of your church culture.*

*A strategy to mobilize a congregation for relational evangelism:*

***I-3 Evangelism***

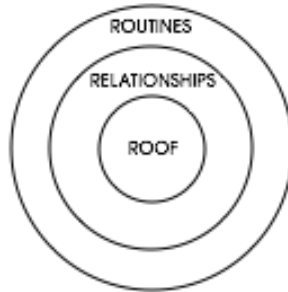
## My I-3 List

Invest, Invite, Introduce

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_



### **#1: Invest:**

**1) Roof, 2) relationships** (existing...workplace, hobbies, sports teams), **3) routines** (places where you shop, get coffee, gas, school)

### **#2: Invite:**

(Chris Swain) - 3 reasons why we should invite people to church:

**#1: Because we want them to connect with biblical community, to worship together, study together, sing, give, serve, and other various connecting-type things.**

- The church is the bride of Christ. It is not to be messed with, minimized, put down, ignored, underrated, or negated. We ought to love the Church as Christ loves the Church. We know that there are so many things that the Church can do, and biblical community is one that it does best. Church is a hub for spiritual growth and we want people to engage in that.

**#2: Because we understand that people will probably get an invitation to follow Jesus through the sermon, study, or general community environment.**

- While inviting someone to church isn't the same as inviting them to Jesus, they will certainly have a hard time missing Him at a gospel-centered

church.

**#3: Because we truly believe that what we have in store will impact their life for the sake of the gospel to help them grow, rest, learn, gain passion, and strengthen their walk with Jesus.**

- Our heart is always in the right place when we seek to find creative and Christ-honoring ways to engage with the King. God gives us creativity and skill for the purpose of bringing Him glory, and it shines bright when the ability and the purpose synergize for His name's sake.<sup>1</sup>

### **#3: Introduce:**

*Sharing the good news of the Gospel with those who don't know Christ.*

### **Evangelism Tools & Apps**

Two Ways to Live - <http://www.matthiasmedia.com.au/2wtl>

Life On Mission: 3 Circles: - <http://lifeonmissionbook.com/conversation-guide>

The Bridge to Life - <https://www.navigators.org/Tools>

One-Verse Evangelism - <https://www.navigators.org/Tools>

The Story - <http://spreadtruth.com/thestory>

Life in Six Words - <http://www.dare2share.org/mobile-app/>

The Roman Road - <http://www.allaboutgod.com/the-roman-road.htm>

Evangelism Explosion - <http://evangelismexplosion.org>

The "GOSPEL" – <http://www.dare2share.org/products-resources/free-teen-stuff/>

### **Bringing It Home To Us...**

1. We said that the first component is prayer. Let's take time right now to pray – for our hearts to be broken over the lost people in our lives & our community and for God to be at work in their hearts so that they are fertile & receptive to the Gospel. (pray generically, but also have people pray out loud for one lost friend/neighbor/coworker they know)
2. A lot of time we love to talk about evangelism, but when it comes down to actually doing it, there are a lot of hindrances to implementing our strategy. What are some of the hindrances in our lives to reaching out

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<sup>1</sup>

<http://www.lifeway.com/studentministry/2015/03/23/stop-inviting-people-to-church/>

to our friends/neighbors/coworkers/family? What are practical steps we can take to overcome these hindrances?

3. Think back to your own story – who was it that invested in you, invited you to church, and introduced you to Jesus? Do you think it was awkward for them to take that step? Was it worth it?
4. Inviting is key – take time right now to fill out your I3 card...and think through who you will invite this month to church!
5. Introducing people to Jesus can be intimidating. Let's take some time as a group to look at 2-3 of these tools on the list and brainstorm together how they might work for us.

**Week #11 - Ministering Strategically to Children, Teenagers, and their Parents**

**Unique Challenges and Unique Opportunities**

**Unique Challenges**

*Small numbers*

*No paid staff*

*Few age specific programs*

--- Other churches offer many more programs and opportunities

*Lack of money for programming*

**Unique Opportunities**

*Individual care and discipleship*

*Greater parental involvement*

*Smaller = Nimble and Flexible*

*Many young people in the community to be pursued*

*Everyone has a place*

*Can build momentum more quickly*

## 12 Core Strategies for Vibrant Ministry to Children, Teenagers, and their Families

### **#1: Keep the vision in front of people.**

– Celebrate in the service....dedications, baptisms, youth camps, retreats, mission trips, other activities

### **#2: Keep programming simple with excellence.**

– We don't need to compete with bigger churches, but we want to have programs that are as excellent for 5 students as they would be for 50 students.

### **#3: Focus on relational ministry.**

– Our ministry programs exist to help us build relationships with parents and students. We must balance our time before, during, and after the programs to develop these relationships.

### **#4: Show off the church's hospitality--- The most important way to welcome kids is to do so personally—with excellent hospitality.**

– We want to help families feel welcomed, excited, safe, and at home in our ministries.

### **#5: Get parents plugged in.**

– Parents are some of the best volunteers because they are invested in the ministry. And having them serving in some capacity helps encourage & build their relationship with their child, even if it's something as simple as coming each week to make & serve lemonade.

### **#6: Involve the entire church body in some way.**

– As leaders, we set the tone for the whole church stepping up to help serve all generations. Be creative & brainstorm with other age groups/demographics to talk about practical ways they can be involved in the ministry. Maybe it's behind the scenes & helping organize supplies & curriculum, maybe it's serving snacks at programs, maybe it's their small group hosting a BBQ for the youth or children every year.

### **#7: Emphasize home discipleship.**

– Equip the parents and encourage them to continue the lessons at home. Give them practical tools, provide trainings as possible, and walk with parents to encourage them as they disciple their children.

## #8: Create inviting, age-appropriate environments.

...paint does a lot to improve an environment. Get creative in how you allow each space to reflect the ages that it serves. (And get creative in how you get resources – utilize people with crafting/construction talents in your congregation to help you transform a space; talk to restaurants & coffee shops that are going out of business or upgrading their space to get tables & chairs for free, etc.)

## #9: Make it safe.

– Walk through the whole program time (from when a parent brings their kid – either in the parking lot or check in booth – to when they pick them up) and troubleshoot anything that could make a parent or child feel unsafe. Fix these immediately to protect the child and the church!

### **Jared Kennedy, Pastor of Families at Sojourn Community Church in Louisville, KY:**

Jesus doesn't just instruct his disciples to welcome children. He gives them a strong warning about the dangers of being a stumbling block: "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes" (Matthew 18:6-7).

By "stumbling block," Jesus is talking about anything that is an impediment to faith. We know that it is difficult for a person to trust God as their Father if their earthly father has abused them. Imagine how difficult it must be for a child to trust church leaders if he has been abused or harmed in a church setting. I cannot stress enough how important safety and security is when you are first starting out.

Kennedy recommends these safety and security essentials:

- Run complete background checks on all children's ministry volunteers in addition to completed applications, completed training on guidelines, and volunteer interviews.
- Provide clearly marked registration areas where registration information is collected and a nametag and accompanying ID number can be assigned to each child for pick up. Volunteers must never release a child to a parent or family member without the proper ID tag or other appropriate identification.
- All volunteers should have some sort of identification. This may be as simple as nametags or it may include a smock or t-shirt with the church's logo.

- Post and train volunteers on emergency policies, evacuation plans, diapering procedures, room schedules, and classroom-cleaning procedures. Toys, cribs, and other things that little hands and mouths touch should be washed or sanitized after each use.
- Post and follow appropriate volunteer/child ratios. Volunteers must never be alone with a child.
- Never give children food that has not been approved by parents. Allergies can be deadly.<sup>2</sup>

### **#10: Balance good content with good fun.**

– When students go home & tell their parents about their time at church, is a majority of it games & contests or is there a Biblical takeaway from each meeting time?

### **#11: Intentionally pursue children and teenagers in the community.**

– Our churches should be places of safety & welcoming to students who don't know the Lord yet. Many people come to make a decision for Christ before they are 18, so we need to be ready to embrace students into the church, even before they are walking with the Lord yet!

#### How do we reach them?

*Regularly brainstorm ways to connect with families in the community.*

--- Keep it fresh and in front of you.

*Get involved in a local school.*

--- Find out ways to serve & encourage teachers and to help them at their events or be a volunteer in the classroom. A 30 year old adult at Calvary first started coming to church as a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader because her crossing guard also volunteered in the school library & invited her to church one time.

*Volunteer coach a youth sports team.*

--- Even if you can't do this personally, come alongside parents who are in the trenches & doing this!

*Encourage parents to be intentional about building relationships through their kid's activities.*

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.sojournnetwork.com/blog/childrens-ministry-church-planting>

--- Help them see themselves as missionaries to their kids' friends & parents!

Randy Smith, the Preschool & Children's Consultant for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention proposes these ideas to connect with families and younger people:

*Go to a ball game or another activity where you will meet families.*

*Develop a business-card-sized promo piece and ask members to give them to neighbors and friends.*

*Lead the church to host an event for the whole town where you might meet families.*

*Brainstorm what talents your church members have and see if they can be used to meet families.*

*Hold an event on neutral ground. A local park can be less threatening than a church building.*

*Ask kids to bring friends. Then ask those friends to bring friends.<sup>3</sup>*

## **#12: Be thankful and prayerful.**

– Raising children & teenagers is hard work! Keep it constantly lifted up before the Lord in prayer, and be intentional about cultivating a thankful heart for the students & children God has entrusted to our church body & the ways God is at work in & through them!

### **Bringing It Home To Us...**

1. In our community, what are the most intergenerational places? Why is it that there aren't too many?
2. When we think of young people in the Bible, often time we see them connected to the whole body of the church, not isolated. What examples can you think of? (Timothy being disciple by Paul, Ruth and Naomi spending time together, Jesus being in the temple as a young man, etc.)
3. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9 together. This wasn't just a command for the Old Testament, but rather it tells us how God intends for parents to be

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/how-smaller-churches-can-reach-children>

the primary disciplers of their children. As a church, how can we help parents live this out at home & in their lives?

4. When you read over the 12 strategies, which 2 are the ones that our church is strongest in for youth & children? Which 2 are we weakest in?
5. Safety & security has to be a priority from today onward in our ministries – who is responsible to make sure these things are happening in our church? Is it a team or a point person that makes sure it's an ongoing process to keep our children safe?
6. In our community, what are some of the ways we can be intentional about pursuing children & teenagers in the community to connect them to God through our church?

### Week #12 – Pursuing Humble, Dependent Prayer

*“What the Church needs to-day is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use -- men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men -- men of prayer.” – E.M. Bounds*

The apostle Paul, knew the power of prayer in his life and ministry. On several occasions we see in his letters, Paul asking, even begging for prayer. Here are just a couple of examples:

*Romans 15:30 - **30** I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf...*

In Ephesians 6:18-20, in the context of speaking on spiritual warfare, Paul unapologetically asks these Christians in Ephesus urging them to Pray...

*“**18**...at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, **19** and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, **20** for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.”*

### We must prioritize three types of prayer:

#### #1: Prayer for our own lives and ministries as leaders.

1. Pray we will keep our eyes on God and not take a step apart from God's leading.

*"but seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."*(Matthew 6:33)

2. Pray for courage and boldness to go where the Lord leads.

*"to that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak."*(Ephesians 6:18-20)

3. Pray for humility before the Lord and people, prioritizing the raising up of other leaders.

*"What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth."*(1 Corinthians 3:5-7)

4. Pray we will beware of relying on our own strength.

*"As each one has received a gift, use it to serve on another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies – in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."*(1 Peter 4:10-11)

5. Pray for wisdom and love in leading God's people.

*"So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us."*(1 Thessalonians 2:8)

6. Pray for the health of our marriages and families.

*"He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?"*(1 Timothy 3:4-5)

7. Pray we will walk worthy of our calling.

*"we haven't stopped praying for you . . . so that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God."*(Col. 1:9-10)

8. Pray we as a church will preach the Word and the Gospel boldly.

Paul wrote from a prison cell...

*"Pray also for me, that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel!" (Eph. 6:19)*

9. Pray we will do whatever it takes to reach the lost.

*"For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings." (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)*

## #2: Prayer for our congregations.

1. Pray for humility in the hearts of the people.
2. Pray for renewed passion for and commitment to Jesus, the Word, and the Gospel in their lives.
3. Pray for God to destroy idols in the hearts of the people.
4. Pray for God to break their hearts for the lost, being willing to do whatever it takes to reach them.
5. Pray for a renewed sacrificial love for others that leads to God-honoring unity.

## #3: Prayer for the lost we are seeking to reach through our church.<sup>4</sup>

1. Pray for God to **deeply convict** of their personal sin and lostness (Acts 2:37; John 16:8)
2. Pray for God to fully open their eyes and **reveal Christ** as Lord and Savior (Matthew 16:17; 2 Corinthians 4:4)
3. Pray for God to powerfully **draw them to Christ** by the Holy Spirit (John 6:44)
4. Pray for God to tear down any **strongholds** that are keeping them from salvation (1 Corinthians 10:3-5)

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<sup>4</sup> Adapted from "How can I effectively pray for lost people and for mission efforts?" by Dr. Gregory Frizzell.

5. Pray for God to make their hearts good soil fully *receptive* to Christ (Matthew 13:8)
6. Pray for God to move them to new birth, saving faith and true repentance (2 Corinthians 5:17; Luke 13:3; Ephesians 2:8-9)
7. Pray that they become fruitful disciples and *witnesses* that lead others to Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; John 15:8)

### Bringing It Home To Us...

1. We have talked a lot about prayer today. What one thing stood out to you from all that we have talked about?
2. We are going to take time today to put this into practice. Let's break up into pairs and take time sharing a bit about how we can pray for each other in our lives & ministries and then pray for one another.
3. (Have a list of congregation members printed out before hand & broken down into smaller sections). Break up into groups of 3-4 and give each group a list of congregation members/visitors and give them time to pray for each person by name.
4. Let's close our time together tonight by praying for the lost in our community. Stand in a circle, but turn outwards before holding hands, and allow people to pray out loud for the lost in the city before the leader closes the time in prayer.