



SECOND **MILE** CHURCH

www.secondmilechurch.com

Membership Packet

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What is the Membership Process?

1. Listen to the teaching sessions from the Membership Class and complete the Membership Packet, including the fill-in-the-blanks.
2. Take the following Spiritual Gifts Assessment and print out the results:
<http://my.cccev.com/about/involvement/SpiritualGifts/Default.aspx>
3. Fill out the online Membership Interview Application form:
<http://secondmilechurch.wufoo.com/forms/membership-interview-application-form/>
4. After your application is received, a pastor will contact you to set up an interview. This interview is not a test or an overly formal meeting that you should be scared or intimidated about. Rather, it is an opportunity for you to discuss your partnership in this ministry and receive any necessary spiritual direction or care. Please bring the following things to your interview:
 - a. Your completed Membership Packet with blanks filled in
 - b. A printout of the results from your online Spiritual Gifts Assessment
 - c. Your Membership Covenant
5. Affirm our doctrine and the expectations of membership (namely, community participation and giving) and sign the Member Covenant.

Why Membership?

FACTS ABOUT HEALTHY CHURCHES

1. They have members who are _____ to doing the works of service that God has prepared in advance for us to do. (Eph 2:10; 4:12)
2. They do *not* have a pastor and staff who are burned out from doing all the work.
3. They have a group of people who are _____ together to embody the good news to the community they are in.

BIBLICAL REASONS TO BECOME A MEMBER OF A CHURCH

1. You have the benefit of receiving the care of and being accountable to spiritual leaders (Heb 13:17).
2. You are not ashamed to identify with Christ or His people (Mark 8:38).
3. You stop being an _____ Christian (Matt 18:15-17; Heb 13:17).
4. You have greater opportunities to use spiritual gifts and _____ in service and ministry (1 Cor 12; Eph 4).

PRACTICAL REASONS TO BECOME A MEMBER OF SECOND MILE

1. _____ that you are on the same page theologically and philosophically with your church.
2. Members experience _____ in pastoral and private counseling, church ceremonies such as weddings and funerals, and opportunities to lead church ministries (membership is required for teaching and shepherding ministries).

SESSION # 1

What We Believe, Part 1

Scripture

Trinity

God the Father

Jesus

Holy Spirit

Condition of Man

THE BIBLE / SCRIPTURE

1. The Bible is the word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts.

- a. "Inspiration" = God-_____
- b. "Inerrancy" = The idea that Scripture in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact.

2 Timothy 3:16 - All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

2. The Bible is Authoritative, so that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.

- a. God cannot _____

Numbers 23:19 - God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?

Proverbs 30:5-6 - Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.

- b. The Bible is not merely _____ or suggestions from people. It is to be obeyed.

2 Peter 1:21 - For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

3. The Bible is Clear, in that it is written in such a way that its teachings are able to be understood by all who will read it seeking God's help and being willing to follow it.

Psalms 119:130 - The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.

4. The Bible is Necessary, for knowing the gospel, for maintaining spiritual life, and for knowing God's will.

- a. "General Revelation" = The knowledge of God's existence, character, and moral law that comes through _____ to _____ humanity.

Romans 1:18-20 - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

- b. "Special Revelation" = God's words addressed to specific people, including the words of the Bible. This allows us to know more _____ truths about God.

Romans 10:13-17 - For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Hebrews 1:1-2 - Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

5. The Bible is Sufficient, in that it contains everything we need God to tell us for salvation and for trusting and obeying him through daily life.

- a. God's word sets us _____

John 8:31-32 - So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

- b. God's word _____ us up

Acts 20:32 - And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

- c. God's word _____ us to serve him

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

TRINITY

1. God eternally exists as three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- a. God has _____ existed

Psalms 90:2 - Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Revelation 1:8 - "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

- b. God is three _____ persons

John 1:1-2 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

Hebrews 7:25 - Consequently, he [Jesus] is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

John 14:26 - But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

2. Each person is fully God.

- a. The Father is God

Luke 11:2 - And he said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.

- b. The Son is God

Colossians 1:15-16 - He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

Hebrews 1:2-3 - but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

- c. The Holy Spirit is God

Acts 5:3-4 - But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

3. There is one God.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 - "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

Isaiah 44:8 - Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? And you are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me? There is no Rock; I know not any."

GOD THE FATHER

1. God the Father is completely sovereign over all things.

- a. God is _____ powerful

Psalm 115:3 - Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.

Genesis 18:14 - Is anything too hard for the Lord?

- b. God cannot do things that are _____ to his character

Hebrews 6:18 - so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.

2 Timothy 2:13 - if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.

James 1:13 - Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.

2. He infallibly knows everything that will come to pass.

Isaiah 46:8-10 - "Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,'"

3. He mercifully concerns Himself with the affairs of men.

Psalms 8:3-4 - When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?

4. He hears and answers prayer.

- a. God _____ us to seek him in prayer continually

Matthew 7:7-8 - "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened."

- b. God uses prayer to _____ events

James 4:2 - ... You do not have, because you do not ask.

Exodus 32:11-14 - But Moses implored the Lord his God and said, "O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, 'With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.'" And the Lord relented from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people.

- c. God is _____ to give us himself through prayer

Luke 11:11-13 - What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

5. He saves from sin and death all who come to Christ in repentance and faith.

John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

JESUS CHRIST

1. Jesus Christ is eternally God.

John 1:1-2 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

John 8:58 - Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."

2. He was born of a virgin to redeem sinful man.

- a. The virgin birth shows that _____ must ultimately come from the Lord
- b. The virgin birth made possible the uniting of full deity and full humanity in one person
- c. The virgin birth made possible Christ's true humanity _____ inherited sin

Isaiah 7:14 - Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Matthew 1:21-23 - She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

3. He lived a sinless life.

Hebrews 4:15-16 - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

4. He was crucified and raised to life in accordance with the Scriptures.

- a. Jesus' death was _____

Isaiah 53:5, 10 - But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed... Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

- b. Jesus' died as a _____ for sinful men and women

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 - For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

2 Corinthians 5:21 - For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

5. He is the only mediator between God and man.

1 Timothy 2:5-6 - For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The Holy Spirit came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

John 14:26 - But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

John 16:8-14 - And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

2. He regenerates, sanctifies, and empowers all who believe in Jesus Christ.

John 3:5 - Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Romans 8:13 - For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Acts 1:8 - But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

3. He indwells every believer in Christ.

- a. _____ genuine Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit

Romans 8:9 - You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

- b. Genuine Christians must still be _____ by the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 5:18 - And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

4. He baptizes believers into the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:13 - For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

5. He seals believers for the day of redemption.

Ephesians 4:30 - And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

6. He is an abiding helper, teacher and guide who gives spiritual gifts for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 - Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the

one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

Romans 12:4-8 - For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

CONDITION OF MAN

1. Man was created by God in His own image.

Genesis 1:27 - So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

2. He sinned and thereby incurred physical, spiritual and eternal death, which is separation from God.

- a. Sin alienates man from _____.

Genesis 3:7 - Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

- b. Sin alienates man from _____.

Genesis 3:8 - And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

- c. Sin alienates man from his _____.

Genesis 3:12 - The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."

- d. Sin alienates man from the _____.

Genesis 3:17 - And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

3. As a consequence, all human beings are born with a sinful nature and sin by choice.

- a. We sin because we're sinners.

Romans 5:19 - For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Psalms 51:5 - Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

- b. We sin because we _____ to.

James 1:13-15 - Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

- c. We are _____ to do things that are recognized as good before God.

Romans 3:10-12 - as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."

4. Humans are, therefore, under God's just condemnation.

Romans 1:18 - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SESSION # 2

What We Believe, Part 2

Salvation
Eternal State
Last Things
The Church
Ordinances
Distinctives

SALVATION

1. Salvation is the gift of God's grace given to all whom God has elected to salvation.

Ephesians 1:3-5 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

2 Thessalonians 2:13 - But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

2. It includes all that God does in saving the elect from the penalty, power and—ultimately—the presence of sin and in restoring them to a right relationship with God.

Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:1-2 - What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

Revelation 21:1-5 - Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

3. As such, it is solely the work of God from initiation to completion.

Romans 8:29-30 - For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

4. The regenerating work of the Holy Spirit is the cause, not the result, of the believer's saving faith.

John 3:5 - Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

5. It cannot be gained by good works, but is a free gift for all who put their trust in Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross.

Ephesians 2:8-9 - For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Romans 3:23-26 - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

6. All who repent of sin and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are forgiven, saved from their sins, declared righteous before God, and are born into the family of God.

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 - For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

John 1:12-13 - But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21 - For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

7. God's purpose for saving His elect is so that they bring glory to Him by their lives.

Titus 2:11-14 - For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Ephesians 1:11-12 - In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

THE ETERNAL STATE

- 1. At death, the souls of those who have trusted in Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and remain there in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at Christ's coming for the Church, when soul and body will be reunited. We then, shall be with Him forever in glory.**

Philippians 1:21-23 - For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.

2 Corinthians 5:6-8 - So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 - For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Revelation 22:1-4 - Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

- 2. We also believe that at death the souls of unbelievers remain in conscious misery until the final judgment when the soul and body will be reunited and cast into the lake of fire – not to be annihilated, but to be separated from God forever in conscious punishment.**

Revelation 20:11-14 - Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

Mark 9:43-48 - And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.'

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 - and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

THE LAST THINGS

1. Jesus will personally and visibly return to earth.

Acts 1:10-11 - And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

1 Thessalonians 4:16 - For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Revelation 22:20 - He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

2. We believe in the resurrection of the body,

1 Corinthians 6:14 - And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.

Romans 6:5 - For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

3. We believe in the final judgment,

Revelation 20:11-12 - Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

2 Corinthians 5:10 - For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

4. We believe in the eternal joy of the righteous on the New Earth,

Revelation 21:1-4 - Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

5. We believe in the endless suffering of the wicked in Hell.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 - and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

THE CHURCH

1. The church is comprised of all true believers and is the body of Christ.

Ephesians 5:25 - Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

1 Corinthians 12:27 - Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

2. The primary purpose of the church is to be a sign and an agent of the Kingdom of God through living and preaching the Gospel.

Matthew 5:13-16 - "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 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. 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 28:18-20 - And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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."

3. Additionally, the church exists to glorify God through worship,

Ephesians 1:11-12 - In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

4. To encourage one another in fellowship,

1 Thessalonians 5:11 - Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Hebrews 10:24-25 - And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

5. To disciple believers to grow in maturity,

Ephesians 4:11-16 - And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

6. To serve by exercising spiritual gifts.

1 Peter 4:10 - As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:

7. The Body of believers within the church is devoted to teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread and prayer.

Acts 2:42 - And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

THE ORDINANCES

1. The Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church, baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of the believer in water into the name of the triune God.

Matthew 3:16-17 - And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Matthew 28:19 - 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,

Acts 2:38 - And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 2:12 - having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

2. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 26:26-29 - Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 - For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

DISTINCTIVE #1 – ROLES OF MEN & WOMEN

- 1. The Bible teaches that men and women have been created in the image of God and therefore have equal standing before him.**

Genesis 1:27 - So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

- 2. Additionally, men and women have equal position in Christ.**

Galatians 3:28 - There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

- 3. Within the Godhead we find total equality with different roles. Though the Father and Son are equal, we find that the Son willingly submits to his Father.**

1 Corinthians 11:3 - But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.

- 4. In the home, the man is called to provide leadership and direction, love his wife in a sacrificial way, provide for the tangible needs of his household, and train his children to fear the Lord.**

Ephesians 5:25 - Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

1 Timothy 5:8 - But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Ephesians 6:4 - Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

- 5. In the home, the woman is called be a helper to her husband and to submit to him with love and respect. She also has the privileged responsibility of raising children and managing her household.**

Genesis 2:20-23 - The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

Ephesians 5:22 - Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

1 Peter 3:1-2 - Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct.

1 Timothy 5:14 - So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander.

- 6. In the church, men and women are partners in every area of ministry together. All ministries in the church are open to all qualified men and women with the singular exception of the office of pastor/elder, which the Scriptures require to be a male-only office. Women can serve as deacons, teach in certain settings, lead worship, serve communion, be in full-time paid ministry, etc.**

1 Timothy 2:11-14 - Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.

DISTINCTIVE #2 – CHURCH DISCIPLINE

- 1. Church discipline is the process of confronting sin to achieve repentance and restoration.**

Galatians 6:1 - Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

James 5:19-20 - My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

Matthew 18:15-17 - "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

- 2. It is also intended to prevent unrestrained sin from spreading to others and protect the honor of Jesus Christ.**

1 Corinthians 5:1-7 - It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

- 3. The informal process of church discipline happens any time a believer confronts another believer about his or her sin and encourages repentance. The formal process of church discipline typically begins when the individual in sin is unwilling to repent over an extended period of time. Therefore, most formal church discipline is not as much about the sin as it is about the hard-hearted unwillingness to repent for sin.**

Matthew 18:15-17 - "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

4. Additionally, those who intentionally stir up divisions in the church should be disciplined with greater swiftness.

Romans 16:17 - I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.

Titus 3:10 - As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him,

DISTINCTIVE #3 – PASTOR/ELDER-LED CHURCH GOVERNMENT

1. The consistent pattern throughout the New Testament is that each local body of believers is shepherded by a plurality of qualified, God-ordained pastors/elders. Simply stated, this is the only pattern for church leadership given in the New Testament.

1 Timothy 3:1-7 - The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 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? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Titus 1:6-9 - if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Acts 20:28 - Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

2. Pastors/elders are called to number of specific duties, including:

a. Prayer and Scripture study

Acts 6:4 - But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

b. Caring for people in the church

1 Peter 5:2-4 - shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

c. Giving an account to God for the church

Hebrews 13:17 - Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

d. Living exemplary lives

Hebrews 13:7 - Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.

e. Preaching and teaching

1 Timothy 5:17 - Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.

f. Praying for the sick

James 5:13-15 - Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

g. Teaching sound doctrine and refuting error

Titus 1:9 - He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

SESSION #3

Our Mission Together

The Missional Church

3 Strands of Evangelism

Developing Your Personal Testimony

THE MISSIONAL CHURCH¹

The Old Reality of Christendom

For most of the last 1500 years, at least in the Western world, the Christian church held a position of power and favored status amongst society at-large. So profound was the church's influence on culture for most of this time that the church actually defined, developed, and prescribed the prevailing societal institutions and normative behaviors of culture. The term used to describe culture during the first 1000 years of this time frame reflects the nature of the relationship between the church and culture: *Christendom*, which literally means 'a Christian world.' Since public institutions were so heavily influenced and even regulated by the church, one of the major implications of Christendom was that society did an excellent job of 'Christianizing' the citizenry. In other words, people learned the language and behavior of Christianity simply by growing up in the West. Christendom was positive in that the language and symbols of Christianity were commonly understood and provided the foundation for public discourse on matters of morality. The obvious flaw of Christendom was that Christian morality without gospel-changed hearts often led to cruelty and hypocrisy.

The Growing Need for a Missionary Mindset

The British missionary Lesslie Newbigin went to India around 1950. There he was involved with a church living 'in mission' in a very non-Christian culture. When he returned to England some 30 years later, he discovered that now the Western church too existed in a non-Christian society, but it had not adapted to its new situation. Though public institutions and popular culture of Europe and North America no longer 'Christianized' people, the church still ran its ministries assuming that a stream of 'Christianized,' traditional/moral people would simply show up in services. Some churches certainly did 'evangelism' as one ministry among many. But the church in the West had not adapted everything it did in worship, discipleship, community and service so as to be engaged with the non-Christian society around it. Though the Western church had trained overseas missionaries to adapt their methods in ways in order to reach non-believing cultures, it did not adjust to its own, no-longer-Christianized culture.

As a result, the church has become increasingly irrelevant to Western culture. Despite the fact that many people admire Jesus and view themselves as 'spiritual,' the increasing majority of society does not turn to the church for spiritual direction or help.

Many traditional evangelical churches still only win people to Christ who are temperamentally traditional and conservative. But this is a 'shrinking market.' And eventually evangelical churches settled in the declining, remaining enclaves of 'Christendom' will have to learn how to think like missionaries in order to reach people in the surrounding culture.

This missionary mindset is what it means to be 'missional.' A missionary is somebody who relationally takes the unchanging gospel into a culture for the cause of Christ, understands people in that culture, learns the questions of that culture, understands the worldview of that culture, and begins a church in that culture that proclaims the unchanging truths of Scripture in the changing cultural context. In the same way, a church that is 'missional' views itself as a missionary to its culture, filled with ambassadors for Christ who take the gospel into every sphere of society.

We don't simply need evangelistic churches, but rather 'missional' churches.

¹ This paper is adapted from Tim Keller's article "The Missional Church," and The Journey's article "What Is a Gospel-Centered Missional Church and Why Do We Need One?"

Elements of a Missional Church

1. Using language that is _____ to the culture.

- A missional church does not shrink from historic, biblical terms, but works to explain what they mean. For example, a missional church does not avoid talking about 'sin,' but it makes sure to clearly explain the concept to a culture that often misunderstands it.
- A missional church avoids 'tribal' language, fancy prayer language, unnecessary evangelical pious 'jargon,' and archaic language that seeks to set a 'spiritual tone.'
- A missional church avoids 'we-them' language, disdainful jokes that mock people of different politics and beliefs, and dismissive, disrespectful comments about those who differ with us.
- A missional church avoids ever talking as if non-believing people are not present. If you speak and discourse *as if* your whole neighborhood is present (not just scattered Christians), eventually more and more of your neighborhood will find their way in or be invited.
- Unless all of the above is the outflow of a truly humble-bold gospel-changed heart, it is all just 'marketing' and 'spin.'

2. Applying the gospel to the core _____ of the culture.

- A missional church seeks to understand the stories of culture (through popular film, music, literature, etc) in order to better understand the hopes, dreams and fears of people, so that it can re-tell culture's story in the light of Jesus. For example, people in American culture have a strong desire to be free. A missional church would work to demonstrate that only in Jesus will people find true freedom.
- A missional church is 'for' the culture and desires to see God's best for the people in society. It is filled with people who love their neighbors as themselves and work for the common good of the whole community.

3. Creating biblical community which is _____-cultural and counter-intuitive.

- A missional church is filled with people who love one another despite their differences of personality, social status, ethnicity, or vocation and support each other in authentic, nurturing, and supportive friendships.
- A missional church goes beyond basic 'fellowship' to embody a 'counter-culture,' showing the world how radically different a Christian society is with regard to sex, money, and power.
- A missional church must be more deeply and practically committed to deeds of compassion and social justice than traditional liberal churches and more deeply and practically committed to evangelism and conversion than traditional fundamentalist churches. This kind of church is profoundly 'counter-intuitive' to American observers. It breaks their ability to categorize (and dismiss) it as liberal or conservative.

4. Practicing Christian _____ as much as possible on the local level.

- A missional church must not spend time bashing and criticizing other kinds of biblical churches, which simply plays into the common belief that Christians are intolerant and can't get along with each other.
- A missional church should cooperate and reach out to and support the other congregations and churches in the local area. This will raise many thorny issues, of course, but our bias should be in the direction of cooperation.

A Case Study

These are elements that have to be present in every area of the church. So, for example, what makes a Community Group 'missional'? A 'missional' Community Group is not necessarily one which is doing some kind of specific 'evangelism' program (though that would be recommended).

Rather—

- if its members love and talk positively about the city/neighborhood,
- if they speak in language that is not filled with pious or technical terms and phrases, nor disdainful language,
- if in their Bible study they apply the gospel to the core concerns of the people of the culture,
- if they are obviously interested in and engaged with the thought of the surrounding culture and can discuss it both appreciatively and yet critically,
- if they exhibit deep concern for the poor and generosity with their money and purity and respect with regard to opposite sex, and show humility toward people of other races and cultures,
- they do not bash other Christians and churches—

then seekers and non-believing people from the city A) will be invited and B) will come and will stay as they explore spiritual issues.

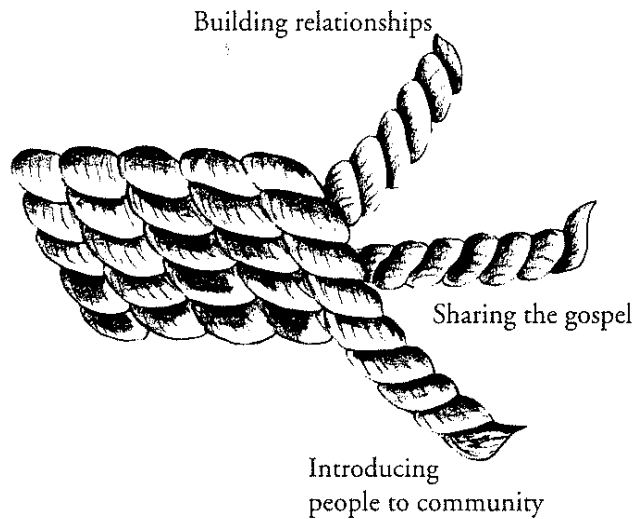
If these marks are not there it will only be able to include those who are already believers or traditional, 'Christianized' people.

THE THREE STRANDS OF EVANGELISM²

In our evangelism, we have developed a simple model to encapsulate the convictions:

- Building _____
- Sharing the _____
- Introducing people to _____

Like three strands of a piece of rope, our approach to mission should involve these three elements.



Note: If one strand is missing, then, in God's sovereign plan, the rope can still hold. But it is stronger when all three are present.

Who are some people that you are trying to reach with the gospel or would like to start reaching?

What are some ordinary ways that you could build relationships with them?

What are some ordinary ways that you could start sharing the gospel message with them?

² Adapted from Tim Chester and Steve Timmis, *Total Church* (Nottingham: InterVarsity Press), 2007, 51-66.

What are some ordinary ways that you could introduce them to your network of believing friends?

Good Reasons to View Evangelism as a Community Effort

1. It gives an evangelistic role to _____ of God's people, not just the eloquent.

Not all of us are eloquent or engaging. Not everyone can think on their feet. Some people are simply not good at speaking to strangers and forming new relationships. One of the practical benefits of the three-strand model of evangelism is that it gives a role to all of God's people. By making evangelism a community project, it also takes seriously the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit in distributing a variety of gifts among his people. Everyone has a part to play: the new Christian, the introvert, the extrovert, the eloquent, the stuttering, the intelligent, the awkward. I may be the one who has begun to build a relationship with my neighbor, but in introducing him to community, it is someone else who shares the gospel with him. That is not only legitimate; it is positively thrilling!

2. Our different gifts and personalities can _____ one another.

If evangelism is a community project, our different gifts and personalities can complement one another. Some people are good at building relationships with new people. Some are socialites—the ones who will organize a trip or an activity. Some people are great at hospitality. Some are good at initiating gospel conversations. Some are good at confronting heart issues.

DEVELOPING YOUR TESTIMONY

Building relationships with non-Christians leads to opportunities for words about our faith. At this point many of us get stuck. What do you say about Jesus when people respond to your actions and give you an opportunity to speak? One helpful tool is the ability to tell your personal story of faith in a way an outsider can relate to. If you get familiar with the story, then you can tell it whether you have 30 minutes or 30 seconds. Others may question God's words in the Bible, but they can never discredit what he has done and is doing in your life.

One of the best examples of this in Scripture is found just after Jesus' interaction with the woman at the well:

John 4:39-42 - Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."

In the spaces below, write what you could say about each one to nail down your personal story of faith. The key question as you develop your story is this—*After a person has heard your story, will he or she also know some basic facts about the gospel, or will they just know you better?*

What I was like before I met Jesus (It helps to identify a dominant rebellious quality that you can focus on—bitter, angry, proud, mean, etc.).

If you've been a Christian since childhood, it may not be helpful for you to describe what you were like at, say, five years old. However, at some point in your life you've probably been tempted to lean on a substitute instead of on Jesus. If that's the case, write what have you been tempted to lean on besides Jesus.

What God used to begin to open my eyes.

If you've been a Christian since childhood, write how God has continued to show you that you need him.

What I saw and understood when my eyes were opened.

If you've been a Christian since childhood, write what you know and love about Jesus.

The difference that Christ has made in my life since I've trusted him.

If you've been a Christian since childhood, talk about how God protected you, cared for you, and forgave you in your time of temptation or suffering and how this experience continues to affect your life.

SESSION # 4

Our Partnership in Ministry

Community Groups

Stewardship

Servanthood

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Mission Statement:

"To be a church that embodies Jesus' message and mission in every place that God sends us."

- Sunday Worship Gatherings are the _____ war.
- Community Groups are the _____ war.

Vision Statement:

"To saturate the Southeast Valley with Gospel-centered churches who work to love and transform the community."

- Community Groups are the _____ centers for future church multiplication teams.
- Community Groups help identify and form new _____.

Practical Considerations:

- People cannot grow spiritually in _____.
- As Second Mile grows larger, we must also grow _____ at the same time.

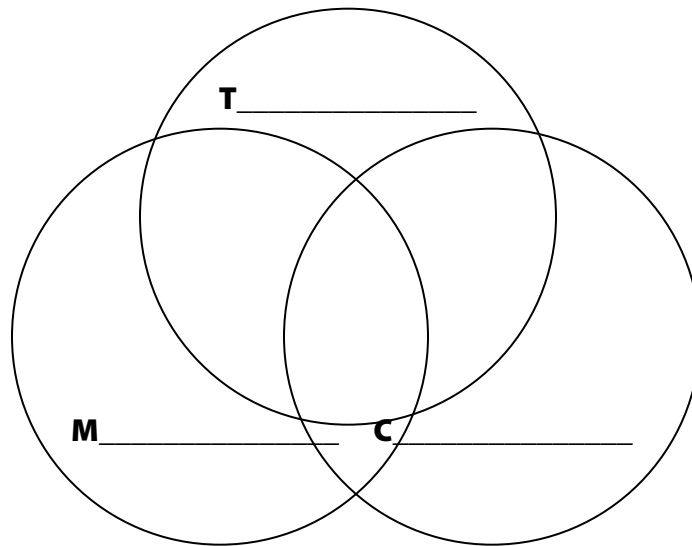
An Important Distinction

- At Second Mile Church, we are striving to be a church _____ Community Groups, not a church with community groups.
- Therefore, members are expected to participate in Community Group life (under normal circumstances).

Pictures of a Community Group

- a **home/family**, where people feel most like themselves
- a **hospital**, where hurting and injured people find healing and recovery
- a **fitness class**, where people exercise their muscles and develop strength
- an **army supply unit**, where those in battle come to be rejuvenated and supplied
- a **lighthouse**, where those in darkness find their way

Necessary Components of Community Groups:



Examples of Truth-Driven Groups:

- Sermon-based application study
- Books & study guides
- DVD studies

Examples of Mission-Driven Groups:

- Room for Joy project
- House of Refuge tutoring group
- Open Table group

Examples of Community-Driven Groups:

- Running/workout group
- "Eat around the world in the Southeast Valley" group
- Film & Theology group

STEWARDSHIP

Why do we teach on the subject of money?

- 25 percent of Jesus' words in the Gospels are related to our resources and stewardship of them.
- 28 passages in the four Gospels
- In the OT & NT combined there are over 800 verses on the subject – dealing with a wide variety of financial topics including, planning and budgeting, saving and investing, debt and tithing
- Money is one of the greatest idols in the world, especially in American culture
- Money is a critical component to the growth and health of the church

A Biblical Perspective of Money

1. God owns _____.

Haggai 2:8 - The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Lord of hosts.

Psalms 50:10 - For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills.

Deuteronomy 8:17-18 - Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

2. If God is the owner, then we are merely _____.

"Stewardship" is defined as "the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care"³

3. Money is fundamentally good, but provides many _____ to sin, including:

- a. Idolatry and false worship

Matthew 6:24 - "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

- b. Giving in order to be _____

Matthew 6:1-4 - "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. "Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

- c. Unnecessary debt

Proverbs 22:7 - The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender.

³Inc Merriam-Webster, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh ed. (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

d. Envy and covetousness

Ecclesiastes 4:4 - Then I saw that all toil and all skill in work come from a man's envy of his neighbor. This also is vanity and a striving after wind.

e. Greed

1 Timothy 6:6-10 - Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

f. Not giving or tithing (robbing God)

Malachi 3:8-10 - Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

g. Selfishness

James 4:1-4 - What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

4. The "tithe" or tenth should be the _____ point of giving, not the finish line.

a. Tithing in the Old Testament

- i. 10% of money given to the church funded the Levite priests' ministry (Num. 18:21-29, 27:30).
- ii. 10% paid for festivals to build community & for celebration (Deut.12:10-11, 12:17-18, 14:22-27).
- iii. 3.3% of the tithe was given to help the poor (Deut.14:28-29).
- iv. Crop Gleanings collected for poor and alien (Lev. 19:9-10).
- v. Occasional additional tithes above and beyond regular giving (Neh.10:32-33).
- vi. Total "mandatory" OT tithe resulted in over 25% of a family's gross income.

b. Tithing in New Testament

- i. Grace centered giving, not law centered.
- ii. The word "tithe" is rarely used in the NT, only for the rebuke of Pharisees and relating OT stories.

c. The Grace of Giving – 2 Corinthians 8 and 9

- i. Giving is a joy and an honor.
- ii. Giving is a heart issue, there is no set standard.
- iii. Giving should be done intentionally.
- iv. Giving should be done regularly, cheerfully and sacrificially.
- v. Giving is tied to your proportion of faith.

- vi. The specific amount is between you and God.

Common Questions About Giving

How Much Should I Give?

Though this is the most common question, it is somewhat misguided. A better question would be, “How much of God’s money should I keep?” If we remember that it is God’s money in the first place, and we realize the freedom we have in the gospel (our identities aren’t bound up any longer by a need for material wealth, status in the eyes of others, security in a difficult world, etc.), then we are free to give generously and sacrificially in a way that demonstrates that God himself is our real treasure.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 - The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

Should Giving Vary By Income?

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 - Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.

Should A Broke College Student Give?

2 Corinthians 8:1-4 - We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints

What Should I do if I Cannot Afford to Tithe?

You may need to begin by reorganizing your spending habits with a wise budget. You should also begin by trying to give *something* that is sacrificial. If you are someone with an unusual need (i.e. traumatic injury, impoverished elderly, struggling single mom) then the church should aid you.

Should Non-Christians Give?

The Bible is clear that non-Christians are welcome in church and are not expected to give any monies.

I’m Married to a Non-Christian. How Should I Handle Giving?

Like all financial decisions for married couples, giving is one that should be made together. You should talk with your spouse, respectfully express your desire to give, and come to a conclusion together. You should not give in a way that is secret or deceitful. Scripture gives principles for interacting with an unbelieving spouse and these principles apply to financial decisions as well:

1 Peter 3:1-7 - Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct. Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious. For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening. Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

If your spouse is unwilling to allow you to give, you may consider whether there are other sacrifices you can joyfully make for the Lord.

Should I Tithe From My Gross or Net Income? Should I Tithe From All My Income or Only My Salary?

Proverbs 3:9 - Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce;

In our society, the government takes a piece of our income before we even see it (in most cases). The Bible teaches the concept of firstfruits, meaning that of all we are given or earn, we should give the first portion back to God.

Can I Get A Tax Deduction For Giving?

Yes. If you give in a way that we can record (i.e. check or cash in a marked envelope) then our church bookkeeper will keep accurate totals of your giving and send you a receipt at the beginning of the year, certifying the amount of your total contributions that are tax deductible for the previous calendar year.

How Can I Give At Second Mile?

At Second Mile there are a variety of different ways that a person can give. None is better than the others—it is simply a matter of individual conscience or preference. Those methods are:

- Cash or Check During the Sunday Services – either as you come forward for communion in the baskets or in the giving boxes located in each foyer. If you give regularly in cash we ask members to put the money in a giving envelope with name and address written on it so that we can track your giving and send you a donation letter for your taxes at the end of the year.
- Check Mailed to the Offices – PO Box 1137, Queen Creek, AZ 85142 – Please do not mail cash (it happens more often than you think).
- By Electronic Withdrawal from your bank account (ACH) – many people like this secure tithing method as it safely withdraws an exact amount from your account on either the 5th or the 20th of the month depending on how you want it to be set up.

Does Second Mile have controls for ensuring my contributions are handled safely?

Yes. At each step in the collection and counting of incoming money, we have at least two people (not related) oversee the process. Once the money is counted and recorded on a control sheet (which is signed by those people overseeing the process), checks are recorded in our Contribution Recording system, and the money is deposited in the bank the next business day. Monthly and annual financial reports are produced for review by the leadership and oversight group. These reports are available to church members as well. An external audit of our books and procedures will be performed on a regular basis.

How Much Does Second Mile Tithe?

Our church gives 10% of its income to fund the planting of other churches around the world. This church planting happens through relationships with other churches in the Valley, partnerships through the Acts 29 Network (www.acts29network.org), and through our international efforts in North India.

SERVANTHOOD

1. The essence of being a follower of Jesus is to become more and more like him. This is the goal of sanctification, which Wayne Grudem defines as, "A progressive work of both God and man that makes Christians more and more free from sin and more and more like Christ in their actual lives."

Romans 8:28-29 - And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Luke 6:40 - A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.

2. One could make a strong biblical case that the essence of Christlikeness is being a _____.

Mark 10:45 - For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

John 13:12-17 - When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

3. Not only did Jesus serve, but he had the _____ of a servant.

Thinking Like a Servant⁴

1. Servants think more about _____ than themselves.

This is true humility: not thinking less of ourselves but thinking of ourselves *less*. They are self-forgetful. When we stop focusing on our own needs, we become aware of the needs around us...We can measure our servant's heart by how we respond when others treat us like servants. How do you react when you're taken for granted, bossed around, or treated as inferior?

2. Servants base their _____ in Christ.

Because they remember they are loved and accepted by grace, servants don't have to prove their worth. They willingly accept jobs that insecure people would consider "beneath" them. The more insecure you are, the more you will want people to serve you, and the more you will need their approval. When you base your worth and identity on your relationship to Christ, you are freed from the expectations of others, and that allows you to really serve them best.

3. Servants think of ministry as an _____, not an obligation.

⁴ Adapted from Rick Warren's *The Purpose-Driven Life*, day 34, "Thinking Like a Servant."