

Spheres of Societal Transformation

CHURCH

Church

Rationale/Background



The Church is God's primary change agent and delivery system to accomplish his redemptive purposes in all of society. God's intention was that the Church would announce and live out his reign and rule to the powers and principalities in the physical, social, spiritual and mental (wisdom) realms of reality. As such, the Church is an embassy of the kingdom of God. The good news of the kingdom of God implies and requires the Church to faithfully and diligently obey both the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.

Consequently, the Church ought to be central to the wholistic transformation of communities both locally and globally. Transformation must take place in all aspects and arenas of society, including the family, marketplace, government, education, health, media, arts, entertainment, sports, science, and technology.

The Church Focus Group of Transform World Connections pursues the role and responsibility of the Church to impact society, exploring the truths of scriptures, the lessons of history (both positive and negative) and the models of contemporary churches. The aim is to encourage the Church to bring these truths and lessons to bear more effectively, boldly, creatively, obediently and sacrificially, in all areas of life as the true priests and prophets, and to see the Church contextualize its mandate appropriately in both open and closed countries with lasting effect in the current and emerging generations.

The Church's Purpose And Responsibilities

The church prepares people to govern society (to rule, Ps. 8:6), and to fulfill the redemption and creation commissions.

1. REGULAR INSTRUCTION OF MEMBERS IN BIBLICAL TRUTH FOR EVERY SPHERE OF LIFE through Sunday preaching, regular classes, and other educational means (Matt. 28:18-20; 2 Tim. 3:16-17)
2. ADMINISTER SACRAMENTS AND CHURCH DISCIPLINE (1 Cor. 5:8-13, 11:23-25; Matt. 18:15-17)
3. DISCIPLING, EQUIPPING, AND ORGANIZING BELIEVERS (Eph. 4:11-12,16; Titus 3:8,14)

Working Vocational Mission Statement (OT Template)

The ecclesiastical order is called to represent God to the people, and the people to God, providing for the discipleship of all believers in the whole nature and character of God and his Word applied to the work and walk of faith, to facilitate the expression of that faith in the worship and sacraments of the Church, and to be a moral model of God's absolute standards of truth.

Vision Statement

The vision of the TW Church Focus Group is threefold. The first is to see the individual followers of Jesus, gatherings of believers and all their leaders (the Church) truly experience life consistent with and characterized by all the blessings, laws and values (the fullness) of the Kingdom of the heavenly Father. The second is to see local churches and the Church as a whole truly live out the fullness of the kingdom in ways which reflect the wholistic power implicit in the whole message of the good news of the kingdom in their present communities, and in ways which point to the future hope and reality of the kingdom of God. The third level of vision is to see the fullness of the kingdom of God, lived out through the Church, begin to truly transform all spheres of life, including the social, economic, educational, artistic, medical, relational and spiritual, characterized by and consistent with Jesus rightful, intended and inevitable rule in all of life.

Principles

For The Primary Responsibility Of Making Disciples

Making disciples is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, a work in which spiritually mature believers cooperate with the Triune God in reproducing other of Christ who are in the process of becoming mature Christians.

This responsibility includes bringing people to repentance and faith in Christ, to baptism, and to obedience to all of the commands of Christ (Matt. 18:19, 20; Col. 1:28, 29).

The emphasis in discipling is authenticity and integrity in becoming more like Jesus Christ by a process of continuing change through a growing, intimate association with him. This concept is primary to a Biblical understanding of discipleship. It is a lifelong commitment of apprenticeship in which philosophy and way of life are completely identified with him (2 Cor. 10:5). It is a process of increasingly aligning one's heart and life with the purposes of God. The process of following and learning often is misunderstood as fanatical when compared with the usual pattern of Christianity (Luke 6:40).

A major obstacle to Bible-obedient living is the accommodation to the value structure of a dangerously secular society. While publicly denouncing the obvious issues of secularism, Christians often subscribe, incrementally and unwittingly, to unbiblical values as a result of media saturation. The corporate effect is passivity and apathy toward the issues of personal purity, Biblical truth, and social justice and ethics (Phil. 3:17-20; 1 John 2:15-17; Eph. 4:17-19; 2 Tim. 4:10).

With the passive acceptance of a worldly mindset, the mandate of our Lord for self-denial generally is not taken seriously. Being a self-denying, Biblical Christian is commonly perceived as an optional feature in Christian living (Luke 9:23-25; 14:25-33). Pre-occupation with self has enthroned "me" to the practical

exclusion of God. Personal feelings have replaced the Word of God as a determinant for Christian living. This lack of adherence to Biblical principles has spiritually incapacitated many believers.

Leaders must take seriously the mandate of the risen Christ to make disciples (Matt. 8:19, 20). Inwardly, this requires that leaders be examples of purity and spiritual maturity. Outwardly, this requires that leaders systematically teach the whole Church the need and cost of becoming a disciple of Christ. In addition, leaders—and the rest of the Body of Christ—must pray for the flock of God that disciples will be drawn to Christ and trained in righteousness (1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Tim. 3:16,17).

With these thoughts in mind, we offer the following affirmations and denials as initial steps in developing a Biblical understanding and practice of the making of disciples.

1. The making of Bible-obeying disciples of all nations and the bringing of all things under the lordship of Christ is the primary purpose and defined objective of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19, 20; 2 Cor. 10:5).
2. The process of making disciples includes teaching Biblical truth sufficient to compel a decision both to repent and receive Christ for justification and to choose a life-long commitment to become an obedient follower of Jesus Christ.
3. Discipleship is a complete commitment to Jesus Christ in the totality of life, and that such a commitment always results in increasingly Biblical behavior.
4. The local church, through spiritual leadership, has the responsibility to make disciples in the environment of caring and accountable relationships.
5. The making of disciples is principally the work of the Holy Spirit, in which spiritually mature believers cooperate with him in reproducing disciples who are in the process of becoming mature Christians, and that this takes place as a disciple follows his spiritual leader as that leader follows Christ (1 Cor. 11:1).
6. Renewal by the Holy Spirit, resulting in repentance and an obedient disciple relationship with Jesus Christ, would greatly reduce the Church's compromise with world values and its lack of impact on society.
7. The scriptural aim of discipleship is to manifest the character of Christ and to fulfill his commission by the Holy Spirit.
8. The essential elements of Christian maturity are identifiable, measurable, and attainable, and that they must be taught to and expected of all believers.
9. Obedience to God's Word proceeds out of a faith relationship with Jesus and His Church and that it will mature, liberate, and bring a person into his place in Christ (Jas. 1:25).
10. As a result of discipleship nations will be shaped by the Gospel of and the kingdom of God (Matt. 28:19).

To be continued...

*Taken from Transform World Manual
Transform World Connections*

*A call to transformation: transformational streams are becoming one fast-flowing river for the healing of the nations.
Edited by Dr. Luis K Bush and a team of volunteer editors*