MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FIELD GUIDE
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOSPEL DNA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOSPEL IDENTITIES</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSIONAL RHYTHMS</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYNTHESIS</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT IS A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT IS A CORE TEAM?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESTABLISHING A SHARED MISSION</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A: How to Launch a Missional Community From Scratch</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B: How to Gospel One Another in Missional Community</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C: How to Multiply a Missional Community</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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INTRODUCTION

This Field Guide is a hands-on, practical training manual for launching, leading, coaching, and multiplying missional communities. It’s intended to be used in multiple ways:

- As a “visioneering” tool to shape the initial DNA of a missional community
- As a resource manual for the work of cultural exegesis
- As a coaching guide for cultivating healthy missional communities
- As a reference manual to consult throughout the life cycle of an MC

It is written specifically with the mission and context of Coram Deo Church in mind. But its principles apply generally to missional communities everywhere.

Make it yours. Take notes. Write down questions. It’s a Field Guide. It isn’t intended for your bookshelf, but for your backpack or briefcase or backseat. May it get dog-eared and coffee-stained in the hard, practical, prayerful work of forming gospel-communities-on-mission.
WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?

Missional Community isn’t about a name. It isn’t about a weekly gathering. It isn’t about building a better church structure.

*It’s about the nature of God and his gospel.*

Missional community isn’t something we do; it’s an expression of *who we are in Christ.* Understanding this changes everything.

The danger in forming missional communities is that we would rush too quickly to methodology (the how).

But healthy missional community life starts with theology - *who we are in Christ because of what God has done for us.*
GOSPEL DNA

GOSPEL MESSAGE
The gospel is a message that is to be preached or proclaimed (Mark 1:14; Acts 14:21; Rom 1:16; 1 Peter 1:12). It is the story of God’s redemption of his fallen creation. It is the good news that God has acted in history to conquer evil, rebellion, and sin and reconcile sinners to himself through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus (1 Cor 15:1-12). A gospel-centered church is one where the gospel is proclaimed clearly, consistently, and compellingly and applied to every aspect of life (1 Cor 9:16-23).

GOSPEL COMMUNITY
The gospel is not just a message to be believed, but a power to be experienced (Rom 1:16). The gospel shapes a new community as those who were formerly God’s enemies are reconciled to Him (Rom 5:10) and adopted into his family (Gal 4:4-7). The church is not a place, but a people – a community that is continually being reformed and renewed by the transforming power of the gospel (Col. 1:6). This new family becomes the conduit and vehicle for God’s mission in the world (Acts 2:42-47).

GOSPEL MISSION
The gospel is a call to mission – a declaration that “the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15). Just as Jesus became a missionary in his incarnation, he sends us into the world as missionaries: “As the Father sent me, so I am sending you” (John 20:21). We are sent to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and to work for the restoration of all of creation to its original “good” (Gen 1:31; Rom 8:19-22). A gospel-centered church will train people to live on mission in the practical rhythms of everyday life.
GOSPEL IDENTITIES

When the gospel takes root in a person, it creates a fundamental change of identity. A Christian’s new identity in Christ can be viewed through multiple perspectives or “lenses.” So we speak not just of a new identity, but of our gospel identities.

DISCIPLES:

Before the gospel changes us, we are enslaved to “the desires of the flesh and of the mind” (Ephesians 2:1-3). We act as our own gods, pursuing our own desires and committed to our own independence. But through the gospel, we become “obedient from the heart” to Jesus’ teaching (Romans 6:17-18). We are changed into disciples – people who want to come under Jesus’ teaching, submit to his ways, and learn what it means to live life for His glory.

As **disciples**, we study the Scriptures to understand what God has said. We practice the disciplines of prayer, solitude, and reflection so that we can discern the leading of the Holy Spirit. We learn from the teaching, training, and wisdom of godly leaders and teachers. We create communities of discipleship so we can learn from each other. And we engage the world around us so we can relate with relevance and wisdom to those who share our cultural setting.

FAMILY:

**We are children of God who serve and care for each other as family.**

Before the gospel changes us, we are “children of wrath” (Ephesians 2:1-3). We are subject to God’s judgment because of our sin. But when we repent and believe the gospel, God’s wrath is absorbed in Jesus and we are adopted into God’s family (Galatians 4:4-7). We become his sons and daughters. We are no longer orphans, alienated from God and each other, but brothers and sisters in God’s family. The strength and depth of our relationships is a living picture of the power of the gospel.

As **family**, we prefer one another and sacrifice for one another. We enjoy being together. We disciple, nurture, and hold one another accountable. We live in ways that preserve the honor of our Father’s good name (Matt 6:9). And we feel love and kinship toward those alienated from God, longing for them to be reconciled to our Father who created them in his image and likeness (Genesis 1:27).
MISSIONARIES:
Before the gospel changes us, we love to “follow the ways of this world” (Ephesians 2:1-3). Our sin, which feels like an expression of freedom, actually enslaves us (Romans 6:16). But in the gospel, God delivers us from our slavery to sin and self so that we can freely serve him by the power of His Spirit (Romans 6:18-22). Released from self-absorption, self-concern, and self-worship, we can joyfully die to ourselves and join God in his mission of reconciliation and renewal.

We are God’s “sent people” who live to make disciples and bring renewal.

As missionaries, we live a life of mission together. We seek tangible ways to love and serve others. We meet the needs of our city through acts of compassion, mercy, and justice. We listen to the questions, objections, and concerns people have about God. We share the gospel winsomely and commend the gospel by our words and actions. We seek to make God’s invisible kingdom visible and tangible to the people around us.
MISSIONAL RHYTHMS

Identity informs behavior. As disciples who are called into God’s missionary family, we re-orient our lives around the mission of God. We do not “fit God in” to our lives; rather, we lay down our lives for His kingdom and mission (Matthew 16:25). A gospel-shaped life plays out in two basic missional rhythms: living out and inviting in.

LIVING OUT: We engage the culture around us (going where they are).

Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. (1 Peter 2:12)

The gospel frees us to “live life among the pagans” – living authentically among non-Christians, cultivating friendship and influence. Rather than isolating ourselves from people who aren’t like us, we live as a “going” people, moving outward into the world around us for the glory of God and the good of humanity.

INVITING IN: We invite others into community (bringing them where we are).

Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Jesus to listen to Him. The Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.” (Luke 15:1-2)

Jesus welcomed anyone who was interested in learning from him. He hung out with people who didn’t fit the religious mold. He regularly shared meals, conversations, and life with others, inviting them to encounter the kingdom of God. In the same way, we invite others into community so they can both hear the gospel and see its effects.
SYNTHESIS

THE BEST WAY TO MAKE DISCIPLES IS IN COMMUNITY AND ON MISSION.

THE DEEPEST COMMUNITY COMES WHEN WE ARE ON MISSION TOGETHER AS JESUS’ DISCIPLES.

THE MOST EFFECTIVE MISSION TAKES PLACE WHEN PEOPLE BOTH HEAR THE GOSPEL PROCLAIMED BY FAITHFUL DISCIPLES AND SEE IT LIVED OUT IN A VIBRANT COMMUNITY.
WHAT IS A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY?

A Missional Community is a missionary family united by the gospel and committed to making disciples of Jesus in a specific area or among a defined people group.

A Missional Community is not a traditional church small group, a Bible study, a support group, a social activist group, or a weekly meeting.*

*A healthy missional community is more than any of these, but may include elements of each.

A Missional Community has two essential components:

» A core of disciples, who are a missionary family formed by the gospel.

(see section “What is a Core Team?” on pages 10-16 of this Field Guide)

» A clearly defined and shared mission.

(see section “Establishing a Shared Mission” on pages 17-25 of this Field Guide)

An MC’s mission should be defined around geography (shared neighborhood) or affinity (shared relationships). Throughout this Field Guide, we will primarily use the language of “neighborhood” when talking about the context for shared mission.
WHAT IS A CORE TEAM?

A Missional Community is a missionary family united by the gospel and committed to making disciples of Jesus in a specific area or among a defined people group.

A missional community has at its core a team of disciples who have formed themselves into a missionary family. We call this the core team.

CORE TEAM QUALIFICATIONS: WHO ARE WE?

People who are part of a missional community’s core team must display three key qualities:

1) **CONVERTED:** the members of a core team must be converted to Christ, evidenced by believing the gospel and obeying God. They must be learning and obeying the teachings of Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20).

2) **COMMITTED:** the members of a core team must be committed to one another and to their local church. This commitment is evidenced by regular participation, contributing to one another’s growth in the gospel, practically serving one another, and pursuing church membership.

3) **COMMISSIONED:** the members of a core team are formed around a clearly defined mission, sent out by Jesus in the power of His Spirit.
WHAT IS A CORE TEAM? (cont’d)

CORE TEAM FUNCTIONS:
WHAT DO WE DO?

The core team of a missional community takes responsibility for actually accomplishing the mission, by God's grace and the Holy Spirit's power. No one can do it alone; discipleship and mission are community efforts. So the people on the core team need to fulfill different roles according to their Spirit-given gifting and ability. Ephesians 4:11-12 outlines five roles God has given within his church:

Ephesians 4:11-12 (ESV): 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...

When we hear “apostles” and “prophets,” we tend to think of the men who wrote the Bible. But that’s not the only way the Bible uses these terms. Here in Ephesians 4, these terms are referring not to offices, but to functions or roles. Think of it this way: there are capital-A Apostles (those who were eyewitnesses of Jesus’ resurrection) and there are lowercase-a apostles (those who are gifted by the Spirit as missionary, pioneering leaders).

Within a missional community core team, we want to see all five of the functions in Ephesians 4 represented.

1. APOSTOLIC FUNCTION
These are the movement-oriented leaders who push forward. They have the big picture in mind. They foresee transitions and navigate changes. They tend to be leaders of leaders. Within a missional community, apostolic leaders enjoy mobilizing people for mission, championing gospel DNA, and moving the group forward in discipleship and multiplication.

2. PROPHETIC FUNCTION
These are the spiritual leaders who push up. They realize and express a desperate need for the Spirit of God in their community as they reach culture. These people want to hear from God - not just talk about him or to him. Within a missional community, prophetic leaders enjoy leading prayer, empowering others in their spiritual gifts, and calling the community to purity, repentance, and worship.
WHAT IS A CORE TEAM? (cont’d)

3. EVANGELISTIC FUNCTION
These are the missionary leaders who push out. They love non-Christians and enjoy sharing the gospel. They want to see people meet Jesus. Within a missional community, evangelistic leaders are consistently stirring the pot, calling others toward mission and evangelism. They regularly bring non-Christians into the community and God often uses them to bring people to faith in Christ.

4. SHEPHERDING FUNCTION
These are the relational leaders who push in. They are keenly aware of the need for the gospel to transform the community and the culture from the inside out. They tend to be discerning, caring people who love others well. Within a missional community, shepherding leaders are relentlessly people-focused. They often enjoy leading discussions, facilitating discipleship, praying with people, and offering pastoral counsel and care.

5. TEACHING FUNCTION
These are the knowledge leaders who push down. They know the Bible and can deepen the community theologically as it reaches into culture. They tend to be theologians – studious, sharp, and thoughtful. Within a missional community, teaching leaders often enjoy leading discussions, discipling others, starting book groups, and answering questions about what the Bible says.

These five aspects of leadership don't require five different persons. It's common for Christians to be gifted by the Spirit in two or three of these areas. But because all five of these functions are essential to the mission of God moving forward, we want to see all five represented within a missional community core team.
WHAT IS A CORE TEAM? (cont’d)

CORE TEAM HEALTH:
WHO DO WE WANT TO BECOME?

As the members of a core team mature and grow, what should they look like? What is our vision of a healthy core team made up of healthy disciples?

1. DISCIPLES: a core team starts out with members who have been converted to Christ. As a core team matures, we envision them going through a couple stages of growth:

   a) Becoming a disciple-making community.
   In other words, they aren’t content to merely be disciples; they become disciples who make other disciples. The community around them is marked by people who are learning to obey Jesus’ teachings in every area of life.

   b) Multiplying disciple-making communities.
   Making disciples is a good start. But as a core team matures, they take on a movement mindset. They want to multiply disciple-making communities so that the city is saturated with gospel-communities-on-mission.

Practically, this looks like a core team made up of leaders who:
• are consistently reading the Bible.
• regularly practice the spiritual disciplines of prayer, solitude, and Sabbath.
• feel “at home” in the Bible, able to quickly find Scripture passages or bring passages to mind.
• can conversationally talk through the Bible’s storyline without notes.
• can study a Scripture passage, discerning what it says, what it means, and how to apply it to life.
• know off the top of their head where to take someone in Scripture to teach the major doctrines of Christianity, such as the doctrines of sin, justification, deity of Christ, the Trinity, and more.
• have arrived at settled convictions on key theological issues; such as gender roles, homosexuality, Reformed soteriology, and the authority of Scripture.
• can confidently and naturally share the gospel.
• can confidently and humbly apply the gospel to the heart idols in a person’s life.
• can effectively train, empower, and deploy others in mission and community life.
• set the pace in practicing repentance and faith towards Jesus.
• regularly tell non-Christians and new Christians to, “Follow me as I follow Jesus.”
**WHAT IS A CORE TEAM? (cont’d)**

- if married, have healthy patterns of communication, sexual intimacy, parenting, financial stewardship, and headship/submission.
- if single, have healthy patterns of sexual purity, financial stewardship, and friendships.

2. **FAMILY:** a core team starts out with a basic commitment to one another, evidenced by regular participation, contributing to one another’s growth in the gospel, practically serving one another, and moving toward church membership. As a core team develops, we envision them going through a few stages:

   a) **Forming.**
   The core team establishes and maintains regular rhythms of community life, such as eating together, celebrating together, serving their culture together, meeting as a community, meeting as individuals or smaller groups within the community, caring for one another practically, recreating together, and consistently applying the gospel to real life issues.

   b) **Storming.**
   A core team on mission will soon face conflict. A key season of growth for any core team is how they respond to this conflict. A healthy core team is marked by regularly engaging conflict with the gospel, forgiving and forbearing with one another and learning from the conflict.

   c) **Risking.**
   A core team that is forming and storming will have tasted God’s goodness in the midst of early formation and ongoing conflict resolution. This taste empowers them to regularly take risks as they press further into the culture around them and deeper into one another’s hearts. The core team moves towards more risk and less comfort.

   d) **Multiplying.**
   Healthy life in community is meant to lead to reproduction. Each core team eventually comes to a pivotal moment when they must choose to remain as they are and enjoy what they already have or multiply the life among them.
WHAT IS A CORE TEAM? (cont’d)

Practically, this looks like a core team made up of leaders who:

• love each other so much and so demonstrably that the culture around them takes notice.
• are aware of their “blind spots” because others feel the freedom to tell them.
• know the real truth about each other and help them grow in the gospel.
• are marked by patience, grace, and self-control in conflict - not quarreling or anger or critical words.
• are practicing their spiritual gifts and trusting others to contribute to the community with their spiritual gifts.
• regularly confront sin with love and directness.
• lead healthy, gospel-centered discussions in the power of the Holy Spirit.
• are skilled in counseling people through various issues such as financial crisis, marriage conflict, depression, sexual sin, and addictions.
• take care of important tasks of administration and organization, such as meal rotations, childcare details, event planning, communication, and more.

3. MISSIONARIES: the members of a core team start out with a clearly defined and shared mission. As a core team develops, we envision them going through several stages:

a) Identifying a shared mission.

Most shared missions won’t be locked-in right away. A core team starts by identifying and investigating its shared mission. A healthy core team dives into this work together, taking risks and regularly communicating about what’s going well and what’s not going well.

b) Incarnation.

A healthy core team quickly lands on an established mission and sticks with it. Much like Jesus Christ became a man and lived among us, the core team develops a communal presence within the neighborhood or people group it is seeking to reach (John 1:14). They remain faithful through difficult seasons, they advance the mission in successful seasons, and they aren’t tossed too quickly when storms come.
WHAT IS A CORE TEAM? (cont’d)

c) Conversion and discipleship.
As the missional community lives incarnationally on mission together, trusting God and praying fervently, they should see non-Christians becoming disciples of Jesus. A healthy core team will not settle for just making a neighborhood a nicer place; they will pray and work toward actual conversions by the power of the gospel.

d) Multiplying the mission.
As a community grows in its mission through conversions and disciple-making, multiplication soon follows. Multiplication may mean saturating a neighborhood with multiple missional communities, or it may mean sending leaders out to launch new communities in new cultures.

Practically, this looks like a core team made up of leaders who:
• have identified, investigated, and incarnated their shared mission together.
• know well the barriers and bridges to the gospel among their neighborhood or people group.
• are resident experts on the culture and history of their neighborhood.
• are respected by the key leaders of their neighborhood.
• consistently serve together and participate together in the culture of their neighborhood.
• contextualize the gospel not only to the collective idea of the neighborhood, but also to the unique persons in their neighborhood.
• can discern where and how the gospel addresses the idols and brokenness of the culture.
• adapt their life rhythms and community rhythms to intersect with the culture.
• enjoy life-giving community together on mission so that they prefer time together more than time apart.
ESTABLISHING A SHARED MISSION

A Missional Community is a missionary family united by the gospel and committed to making disciples of Jesus in a specific neighborhood.¹

An essential component, then, to a missional community is this commitment to making disciples of Jesus in a specific neighborhood. We call this the shared mission. How does such a mission emerge clearly? How defined should it be? And how does it become shared? These are questions that we have found to be of immense significance for the health of a missional community.

We aren’t merely asking for a community of disciples to add mission to whatever else they might be doing. We are arguing that the shared mission of a community should be the organizing principle around which everything else is built.

The idea of shared mission as the organizing principle for our communities can sound foreign to those of us who have been around the church for any length of time. We have grown so accustomed to community-driven community that it is difficult to imagine mission-driven community. Therefore, a couple of examples might help.

First, consider a short-term mission trip.

From the beginning, the entire trip is planned around the clearly defined, shared mission - whether that be running a Bible Club for urban children or painting a church building. Training meetings focus on skills or knowledge required for the shared mission. Relationships are built in light of the shared mission. During the trip, the schedule of each day is built around the shared mission. Wake up time, quiet time alone with God, time in group prayer, meals, and most everything in between are structured with the shared mission in view. Inevitably, people you don’t like go on this trip with you. You sit by them on the airplane, and you end up in the same dorm room with them. Tension builds and conflict erupts on the path of shared mission.

¹ Throughout this section of the Field Guide, we refer to neighborhoods as the primary area of shared mission. We realize that some missional communities may be on mission to a broader area of the city or to a specific people group or affinity group. But we have chosen to use the language of neighborhood because thinking in terms of neighborhoods gives a clear, sharply focused target for shared mission.
ESTABLISHING A SHARED MISSION *(cont’d)*

The trip brings the best and the worst out of you, and everyone sees it because they are with you all the time. You can’t hide! You can’t fake it!

As the trip progresses and sin is exposed and conflict is confronted, the gospel has great opportunity to bring about redemption in areas of your life of which you never thought (or at least never cared to think of). By the end of the trip, with the mission accomplished, you are often on your way home shocked with the growth of the gospel in your heart, worn out from the hard work, and enjoying your new friendships.

This is the power of shared mission.

**Second, consider a church planting team.**

A group of 15 people who have committed themselves to planting a church in Spain. What do they do next? They investigate the culture of Spain. They learn Spanish, eat Spanish food, drink Spanish drinks, and move into living spaces in Spain. They discover bridges and barriers to the gospel in Spain. As they investigate the culture, each person on the team has different roles to play. One person might be the quintessential host. Another person might be the prayer leader. Another person might keep the rest of the team anchored in the Scriptures as they contextualize into a brand new culture. A few people might excel in reaching out to the people of the culture and inviting them into the community. Over time, the team incarnates within the culture. They participate in festivals, they serve their local neighborhood, they invite friends to meals or parties, and they intentionally disciple one another. The rhythms of their entire existence are oriented around the mission of making disciples in Spain.

This is the power of shared mission.

We want missional communities to be just as *driven by shared mission* as a church planting team moving to Spain. Therefore, it is crucial for a missional community core team to establish a shared mission and begin to build their community rhythms around that shared mission.

How does a team do this?
ESTABLISHING A SHARED MISSION (cont’d)

Step 1: IDENTIFY

The first thing a core team needs to do is identify what its shared mission will be. Of whom will you seek to make disciples? What neighborhood or people group will you focus on?

DON’T just pick the first place that seems to make sense – that can lead to a mission based on theory, disconnected from the real desires of your heart. Instead, we urge you towards prayer and practice as you identify your shared mission.

First, get with God. Intentionally take time to pray, listen to God, and follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. Allow the more prophetic and apostolic leaders on your core team to guide the rest of the team toward a prayerful posture and practice.

Second, hear from one another. What do each of you already know about the potential neighborhood? How do you feel about the people? Where does your heart break? Where does your heart engage with this neighborhood?

Third, make sure you avoid some common pitfalls:

• A too-narrowly defined mission doesn’t allow for growth and multiplication. Examples would be:
  » “We exist to be a missionary family who cleans up trash on the 2300 block of South 42nd.”
  » “We exist to reach my friends and family with the gospel message of Jesus.”

• A too-broadly defined mission makes the mission vague and unattainable. Examples would be:
  » “As a committed family of God, we are on mission to make our city a better city.”
  » “We exist to gather people in the Northwest suburbs and make disciples.”
ESTABLISHING A SHARED MISSION (cont’d)

• A **mission weak on the gospel** emphasizes acts of kindness or cultural renewal at the expense of declaring the gospel. Examples would be:
  » “Our missionary family exists to be friends to the artist subculture in downtown Omaha by serving musicians and weaving our lives into theirs.”
  » “We exist to make disciples of Jesus by following his example of serving, especially the Benson neighborhood.”

• **Confusing mission and service projects** leads to lots of activity, but little disciple-making. For reference, consider this chart:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SHARED MISSION</th>
<th>SERVICE PROJECT</th>
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<tr>
<td>flows out of our identity as missionaries</td>
<td>can skip over identity and be only a practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long-term in scope</td>
<td>short-term in scope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>requires shared ownership</td>
<td>does not require ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>affects every part of the MC’s life</td>
<td>is an add-on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>might include short-term tasks, but the goal is long-term disciples</td>
<td>usually values short-term tasks over long-term disciples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>requires patient, enduring love</td>
<td>requires adrenaline during the event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>requires ongoing gospel intentionality</td>
<td>might be random or distracted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exposes outsiders to ongoing gospel community</td>
<td>exposes outsiders to a one-time expression of care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>includes service projects</td>
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Step 2: INVESTIGATE

Once you have identified the people group you’re seeking to make disciples of, you need to investigate its ways of living, thinking, and relating. This is part of the work of a good missionary family. We can’t assume we know what people are like. We must take the time to get to know them “on their turf” and understand how they see the world.

What should you be looking and listening for? Two things: barriers and bridges.

• **Barriers** are the obstacles that inhibit the progress of the gospel in your neighborhood. Author Brad House identifies three types of barriers (see Brad House, *Community* (Crossway, 2011), p. 129):
  » **Practice:** “Barriers of practice are the practical obstacles of time, space, and accessibility that hinder the gospel... We have to ask ourselves if there is anything about the space or times of our gatherings that presents a hurdle to our neighbors.”
  » **Culture:** “Cultural barriers include language and behaviors that alienate people before they can hear or experience the gospel.”
  » **Perception:** “Barriers of perception are the images, stereotypes, or experiences that people have had within the church that affect their perception of Jesus and the church.”

• **Bridges** are the shared spaces or experiences that can provide a starting point for engaging missionally with the neighborhood. What is already going on that you can join in? Some examples:
  » Holiday festivals, parades, parties
  » Neighborhood sports leagues
  » Neighborhood association meetings
  » Local school mentoring programs
  » Garage sales or craft fairs
  » Neighborhood clean-up day
  » Area bars, pubs, coffee shops, or restaurants
  » *For non-neighborhood-based MC’s:* what does your affinity group do together and how can you join in?
ESTABLISHING A SHARED MISSION (cont’d)

Step 3: INCARNATE

Once you have identified your mission and investigated possible barriers and bridges, you’re ready to incarnate—that is, to “take on flesh,” to become part of the neighborhood.

*Jesus* did this when he became flesh and moved in to the neighborhood (John 1:14). You do this by creating a specific plan for how your missional community will practice the rhythms of living out and inviting in.

Brad House identifies four “spaces of engagement” that a missional community inhabits together.

![Diagram](Diagram adapted from Brad House, Community, p. 134)
ESTABLISHING A SHARED MISSION (cont’d)

- **Fellowship:** this is the space most commonly associated with a community group: a place of Bible study, prayer, confession, repentance and spiritual formation. This is the most intimate space and therefore the most intimidating for a new person.

- **Hospitality:** in this space, we create welcome and belonging. We’re still inviting people to “our turf,” but there is a low barrier of entry. By practicing hospitality, we open opportunities for natural, unforced relationships and conversations. Examples include parties, meals, standing reservations at a local restaurant, a pick-up football game in the local park, a poker night, a knitting club, a book club, or any other regular event to which you can invite someone new.

- **Service:** in this space, we work together to meet practical needs. Our goal is to bless the neighborhood in tangible ways – and to invite others to join us. Service moves isolated church people out into the community, and allows us to build relationships by inviting non-Christians to join us.

- **Participation:** in this space, we join our neighbors in the activities and events that are already taking place around us.

We can see the early church existing in each of these four spaces when we read Acts 2:42-47:

- **Fellowship:** they devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles, to the prayers, to praise.

- **Hospitality:** they broke bread together with glad hearts, had favor with all the people, shared food and possessions, and many people were added to their number.

- **Service:** they sold their possessions and belongings and distributed the proceeds to all, the apostles were doing signs and wonders.

- **Participation:** they had favor with all of the people around them.
Fellowship and hospitality are spaces where we are generally *inviting in*; service and participation are spaces where *living out* is more prominent. As you engage in these spaces, it is necessary to practice both *living out* and *inviting in*. If we only *live out* with our neighbors by serving and participating in culture, we will never actually make disciples of Jesus. But if we only *invite in* by practicing hospitality and fellowship, we will soon run out of friends to invite and find ourselves surrounded by only church people.

This can be summed up in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RHYTHM</th>
<th>SPACE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>ACTS 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fellowship</td>
<td>most intimate for Christians; most intimidating for neighbors</td>
<td>teaching, prayer, praise, all who believed had all things in common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>lower entry barrier; still &quot;our turf&quot;</td>
<td>breaking bread, many added to their number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>good works to bring glory to God and good to your neighborhood</td>
<td>selling and distributing possessions to those in need, signs and wonders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>joining in what is already happening</td>
<td>favor with all people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ESTABLISHING A SHARED MISSION (cont’d)

**Step 4: Plan and LAUNCH**

Before you launch a missional community, you need a **cohesive plan** for engaging in all four of these spaces together. What gets planned gets done.

Your plan exists to help your MC engage together in all four of these spaces. This is what it means to be on mission in community! Remember, mission is the organizing principle for your community. You are not a fellowship group with “optional” hospitality, service, and participation events. You are a missionary family committed to making disciples among a particular people group.

This doesn’t mean everyone has to be at every event. But it does mean there should be a regular sense of the community **together** in fellowship, in hospitality, in service, and in participation. The mission must be shared.

Appendix A, “How to Launch a Missional Community,” will guide your core team through the nitty-gritty, practical process of actually making the shared mission happen. **Use this Appendix as a template to help you create a clear action plan.**
APPENDIX A: HOW TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FROM SCRATCH

To launch a Missional Community you need to do two things:
1) Gather a core team
2) Establish a defined and shared mission

GATHER A CORE TEAM

A Missional Community is a missionary family united by the gospel and committed to making disciples of Jesus in a specific neighborhood.

A missional community has at its core a team of disciples who have formed themselves into a missionary family. We call this the core team.

Most likely, a core team will come together in one of two ways:
1. Sometimes a core team forms when an apostolic leader gathers some other disciples to join him in a mission God has already placed on his heart. In this case, the leader must lead boldly and humbly as he forms the core. A foolish leader will rush the pace and try to control the formation of the core. A wise leader will trust the sovereignty of God while actively participating in the formation of the core.
2. Sometimes a core team forms without already having a defined and shared mission. In this case, the core team must be careful that they do not form around themselves, but instead intentionally re-form around the shared mission.
APPENDIX A: HOW TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FROM SCRATCH (cont’d)

As you form your core team, please refer to pages 10-16 of this Field Guide. You need to make sure:
- All the members of your core team are converted, committed, and commissioned (see page 10)
- All five of the Ephesians 4 functions (apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, teacher) are reflected within your core team (see pages 11-12)
- Your core team understands and is committed to health (see pages 13-16)

Coach Conversation: Where do you see evidence of God’s work in the assembly of this core team? What strengths are present? What weaknesses? What blind spots might this core team have?

ESTABLISH A DEFINED AND SHARED MISSION

Once the core team has been formed with the appropriate qualifications and functions, it is time to get to work establishing a shared mission. Use the following exercises for this purpose.

Step 1: IDENTIFY
The first thing a core team needs to do is identify what their shared mission will be. Of whom will you seek to make disciples? What neighborhood or people group will you focus on?

EXERCISE A: LISTEN TO GOD
First, get with God. Take extended time to listen, pray, and journal about your neighborhood.
1. When can you find one hour this next week to only pray and listen and journal?
2. When can you find a few consecutive hours (3-24) in the next month to only pray and listen and journal?
Make sure that part of this process includes prayer walking the neighborhood where God might be calling you.
APPENDIX A: HOW TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FROM SCRATCH (cont’d)

EXERCISE B: LISTEN TO ONE ANOTHER
Second, hear from one another. Get your core team together and dialogue with one another using the following questions. Write down notes and insights.

1. Who do you already know in this neighborhood or people group?
2. Who are you praying for in this neighborhood or people group?
3. What are you excited about in this neighborhood or people group?
4. What do you wish could change among this neighborhood or people group?
5. What do you believe is God’s desire for this neighborhood or people group?

Inevitably, some of the people on your core team will not have proximity to the people you’re seeking to reach – they won’t live in the neighborhood or know many of the people. That is okay, but they need to be committed to actively sharing the mission even though they don’t live there. Include them in this process.

Now, based on your time of prayer and discussion write out a draft statement of your shared mission:

Coach Conversation: Is the shared mission clearly defined? Is it too narrow or broad? Is the gospel the power and purpose of this shared mission? Is the shared mission more than just service projects?
APPENDIX A: HOW TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FROM SCRATCH (cont’d)

Step 2: INVESTIGATE
Once you have identified a people group you’re seeking to make disciples of, you need to investigate their ways of living, thinking, and relating. This is part of the work of a good missionary family. We can’t assume we know what people are like. We must take the time to get to know them “on their turf” and understand how they see the world.

EXERCISE A: CONTACT
Who in your neighborhood or people group can you spend time with this week to hear their story and learn more about the culture? Intentionally set aside time and space to make this happen. Here are a few suggestions as you go:

Examples of People to Talk With:
• Neighbors
• Anyone you already mentioned in Exercise 1 (“Identify”)
• Neighborhood Association leaders
• Grocery store clerks
• Local bartenders
• Mail carriers
• Staff at local community centers

Write down 3-5 people you’re going to contact:
How to Talk:
- Talk with them in a natural, normal, conversational way. You are not a salesman or a hit-and-run evangelist. You are part of the neighborhood yourself, connecting with other members of the neighborhood.
- If necessary, let them know you are part of a group who wants to learn more about the neighborhood and how to serve or help the neighborhood.
- Tell them thank you and answer any questions they have. Let the conversation flow naturally, even if it is prolonged. It is better to build a relationship with other members of your neighborhood than to get all the research done in a one-hour time window.

Suggested Questions to Ask:
- How long have you been a part of this community?
- What’s the most common “down time” for this community? When do people rest, relax, hang out?
- What tends to bring people together? Any holidays, activities, or causes that people tend to rally around?
- Where do people hang out around here?
- What needs are you aware of in the community?
- How do people in the community feel about religion - positive or negative?
- What churches have a good - or bad - reputation in this community? Why?
- What good or bad experiences have you had with churches?
- Who are some of the leaders in the community?

Environments to Make Contact:
- Break into groups of 2 and walk around the neighborhood during a meeting together.
- Throw a BBQ or party and invite as many neighbors as possible. Ask questions in casual conversations through the party. Discuss the responses later with your core team.
- Everyone on the core team invites a neighbor over for dinner. Discuss the responses the next time the core team gathers.
- Put together gift baskets to distribute on your block. Ask casual questions when neighbors come to the door.
- Go to a Neighborhood Association meeting and ask the questions during the meeting.
APPENDIX A: HOW TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FROM SCRATCH (cont’d)

EXERCISE B: WATERING HOLES
Every culture has “watering holes” - places where the people of the culture intersect, whether intentionally or unintentionally. These might be eating places, coffee shops, bars, parks, business locations, or even driveways.

Where are the “watering holes” in the neighborhood God might be calling you to? Plan a time to gather there. Who can you invite to join you?

WATERING HOLES:

WHEN TO GO:

WHO TO INVITE WITH ME:

EXERCISE C: CELEBRATION
What are the forms of celebration that people in your neighborhood engage in? Find a community calendar, online blog, or Facebook page for your community and write down the upcoming events. Pick one or two that you can attend in the next couple of months. Journal your thoughts on what people celebrate and how people celebrate.

CELEBRATIONS TO ATTEND:

WHAT THIS PEOPLE CELEBRATE:

HOW THEY LIKE TO CELEBRATE:
APPENDIX A: HOW TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FROM SCRATCH (cont’d)

EXERCISE D: HISTORY
Do some historical research on the neighborhood or people group. You can learn a lot from a simple Google search. Based on your research:

HOW DID THEY COME ABOUT?

WHAT STORIES SHAPE WHO THEY ARE?

EXERCISE E: BARRIERS AND BRIDGES
Now it is time to identify barriers and bridges to the gospel among your neighborhood. Remember, barriers are the obstacles that could inhibit the progress of the gospel in your area. By God’s grace you want to remove all obstacles impeding the clear proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Bridges are the shared spaces or experiences that can provide a starting point for engaging missionally with the people in your neighborhood.

What practical barriers have you noticed? Think through...
## APPENDIX A: HOW TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FROM SCRATCH (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KIND OF BARRIER</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF BARRIER</th>
<th>OUR MISSIONARY RESPONSE TO THE BARRIER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TIME</td>
<td>EXAMPLE: everyone commutes home and most aren’t in their homes until 6:15pm</td>
<td>EXAMPLE: don’t schedule hospitality events before 6:15pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPACE</td>
<td>EXAMPLE: most neighbors have never been in another neighbor’s house</td>
<td>EXAMPLE: we need to gather in a more public space for many of our gatherings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCESSIBILITY</td>
<td>EXAMPLE: most neighbors didn’t know any other neighbors</td>
<td>EXAMPLE: we need to start with just establishing places for people to get to know neighbors in a very relaxed, low pressure environment</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A: HOW TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FROM SCRATCH (cont’d)

What cultural barriers have you noticed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KIND OF BARRIER</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF BARRIER</th>
<th>OUR MISSIONARY RESPONSE TO THE BARRIER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CULTURAL</td>
<td>EXAMPLE: the people in our core team speak Christian-ese and can’t stop saying the phrase “heart idolatry”</td>
<td>EXAMPLE: we need to practice explaining our terms to one another</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What perception barriers have you noticed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KIND OF BARRIER</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF BARRIER</th>
<th>OUR MISSIONARY RESPONSE TO THE BARRIER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERCEPTION</td>
<td>EXAMPLE: many neighbors talk negatively of the church around the corner</td>
<td>EXAMPLE: we need to be characterized by serving our neighborhood to repair their negative view of church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A: HOW TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FROM SCRATCH (cont’d)

As you consider the possible bridges, you won’t be able to engage with all of them at once. Therefore, you will need to prioritize which bridges to build upon and when.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF BRIDGE</th>
<th>OUR MISSIONARY RESPONSE TO THE BRIDGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parties, parades, festivals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports leagues or events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garages sales/craft fairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local restaurants, pubs, bars, coffee shops, grocery stores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal events (such as poker nights, ladies’ nights out, football game parties)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Coach Conversation:** Where has the core team excelled in investigation? Is anything lacking?
## APPENDIX A: HOW TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FROM SCRATCH (cont’d)

### STEP 3: INCARNATE

Once you have *identified* your mission and *investigated* possible barriers and bridges, you’re ready to *incarnate* - that is, to “take on flesh,” to become part of the neighborhood, to become an “insider” within your defined people group. You do this by creating a specific plan for how your missional community will practice the rhythms of *living out* and *inviting in* in the following four spaces:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RHYTHM</th>
<th>SPACE</th>
<th>BASED ON BRIDGES AND BARRIERS, THIS WILL LOOK LIKE...</th>
<th>BASED ON OUR UNIQUE GIFTS AND FUNCTIONS, WHO WILL &quot;OWN&quot; THIS?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|        | Fellowship:  
*How will we fellowship with one another on a weekly basis?* | Frequency:  
Time:  
Place: | |
|        | Hospitality:  
*How will we practice regular hospitality toward the people we’re engaging?* | What hospitality events will we host?  
Where will we host them?  
Who will we invite?  
How will we connect hospitality to fellowship? | |

**INVITING IN**
### Service:
What service opportunities will we take advantage of?

List of possible service opportunities:

How will we get the people of our MC involved?

How will we connect service to hospitality and fellowship?

### Participation:
How will we participate together in the life of the neighborhood or city around us?

What events or happenings can we join in our neighborhood?

How will we help our MC celebrate the culture of our neighborhood?

How will we be intentional in our participation to connect it to service, hospitality, and fellowship?

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**Coach Conversation:** Where has the core team excelled in their plan for incarnation? Is anything lacking? How are the four spaces linked so that making disciples actually happens?
### APPENDIX A: HOW TO LAUNCH A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY FROM SCRATCH (cont’d)

#### STEP 4: PLAN AND LAUNCH

Put together a calendar for your MC for the next 3 months based on your exercises thus far. Keep in mind that as you *live out* and *invite in* within these four spaces, your MC rhythms may vary greatly from other missional communities.

What will a regular week look like for your missional community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
<th>SATURDAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What will a regular month look like for your missional community?
A missional community is centered on the gospel, sustained by the gospel, and sent with the gospel. A key aspect of any missional community is how they gospel one another. This element is so crucial to the health of a missional community that we want to provide a flexible skeleton for how to gospel one another in the context of missional community.

THE CENTRALITY OF THE HEART

The Bible clearly teaches that the heart is the center of our lives (Proverbs 27:19; Luke 6:44-45). From it flow the wellsprings of life (Proverbs 4:23). Therefore, if we are to be effective in bringing about change, we must get to the heart.

In the Bible, the heart does not refer to merely the emotional side of our being. Rather, heart refers to the character, personality, will, and mind. The heart is the essence of a person. The heart is the source of beliefs, behaviors, and actions.

Passages like Romans 11:36, Acts 17:26-28, and Isaiah 45:1-7 tell us that God is sovereign over even the human heart. All circumstances in our lives are orchestrated or permitted by God to reveal things in our hearts and to stir us to respond to Him. He isn’t just trying to teach us something in the middle of our circumstances; he is actually sovereign over those circumstances to bring about change so that we think, feel, and act more like Jesus.

LOVING IN ALL OF LIFE

In a healthy gospel community, people are loving one another in all aspects of life. Their love and care for one another isn’t restricted to appointed meeting times. Situations arise and hearts are revealed in missional rhythms throughout the week. Often times, you might notice something amiss in a fellow community member before they do. Talking about this is an expression of love, and these gospel conversations can and should be happening beyond the weekly meeting.

GETTING TO THE HEART

So how do we love someone by applying the gospel to their heart? Below is a flexible, 4-step progression to help “get to the heart” in a way that leads to change.
APPENDIX B: HOW TO GOSPEL ONE ANOTHER IN MISSIONAL COMMUNITY (cont’d)

1. SITUATION: Start by examining the situation and gathering the pertinent facts. Different people in the community might ask questions like:
   a. What happened?
   b. Can you walk me through this particular situation?
   c. What about this situation stands out to you?
   d. How often does this happen?
   e. What did that look like?
   f. What do you mean by that?

Help the person you’re talking to share the facts. Don’t try to solve things right away or give advice or tips or correction. Simply examine the situation.

2. RESPONSE: After hearing what happened, start to assess the person’s reaction to the situation. Different people in the community might ask questions like:
   a. What did you do in response?
   b. How did that make you feel?
   c. What was going on inside you?
   d. What should have happened?

   Perhaps the most powerful question is simply, “Why?”
   e. Why do you think you did this?
   f. Why do you think you reacted this way?

Again, it is important that you don’t try to fix things right away. Patiently listen and try to understand the person you’re talking to. Ask questions.

When appropriate, it is good to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15). Often it is best to pause and pray during this time. Ask God to reveal anything else you might need to know. Ask him to speak from the Scriptures through his Spirit. It is tempting to believe that our spiritual inquiry can fix this person, but that is not true. You need the revelation of God’s Spirit and the love of the Father to lead to real change.
APPENDIX B: HOW TO GOSPEL ONE ANOTHER IN MISSIONAL COMMUNITY (cont’d)

3. **TRUTH:** After examining the basic facts and the person’s response to the situation, transition to speaking the truth of the gospel. *There is no formula* for what this looks like! However, your speech should be saturated in the gospel of grace, words of Scripture, and love. Different people in the community might identify:
   a. *Evidences of Grace:* How is God present and working in this situation?
   b. *Attributes of God:* Where does the person need to look away from the situation and look towards God’s glory, grace, and beauty? Often, our circumstances dominate our view. We need the help of a community to lift our gaze up to Jesus so that our understanding of the circumstances is reframed.
   c. *Sin to Confess:* What sin needs to be confessed and repented of? Often times, you need to help a person identify that they are having a sinful response. Even if they are hurt, often a person needs to repent of their own sin as well, and part of the healing process includes repentance. The hope is that the time of asking questions and drawing out a person points to the deeper sin in this situation.
   d. *Gospel Power:* How does the gospel free us to change? The gospel is what gives a person a reason to change and the ability to actually change. How can you remind a person of who they are in Christ, so that they know they can change?
   e. *The Need for Prayer:* How can we pray with and for the person we’re talking to? Take time to invite the Spirit to work in this person’s heart, doing what no human can do. Ask God to speak to this person and take time to listen.

4. **CHANGE:** After discerning the real heart issues and speaking gospel truth, you can turn to helping with practical, real-life course corrections. The Bible is clear that we cannot be merely hearers of the word; we must also be doers (James 1:22). While this step needs to happen *after* gathering facts, hearing responses, and speaking gospel truths, this step most certainly needs to happen. It is ongoing and often includes...
   a. *Practical Counsel:* The Bible talks about a pattern of putting off the old self and putting on the new self (Colossians 3:5-17). Your community can help a person know what to “put off” and “put on.” What practical changes should this person make? What should they stop doing or start doing?
b. **Accountability**: Your community can hold each other accountable for change.

c. **Stories**: You can encourage one another by sharing stories of change and what helped you during that time.

d. **Scripture**: The Holy Spirit will bring to mind Scripture passages for encouragement, correction, rebuke, or training (2 Timothy 3:16).

The following contrasts help to highlight the differences between a *gospel approach to change* and a traditional “religious” approach:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dynamic</th>
<th>Gospelizing One Another</th>
<th>Classic Religious &quot;Accountability&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power Source</strong></td>
<td>the Cross: our identity in Jesus</td>
<td>the Law: “what we should do or not do”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What it Looks Like</strong></td>
<td>asking questions and hearing a person’s heart before speaking into the problem</td>
<td>speaking quickly to the perceived problem, often in the form of tips or advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of Prayer</strong></td>
<td>inviting God to give Himself, inviting God into the situation</td>
<td>asking God for help to do what you figured out you are supposed to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of Community</strong></td>
<td>bring the person to the cross, where they can be changed</td>
<td>get the person fixed so they can come back to the cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaks</strong></td>
<td>what you can’t do, God did in Christ for you</td>
<td>you can do this for God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Requires</strong></td>
<td>abundant grace and the presence of the Holy Spirit</td>
<td>ongoing performance and the presence of rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Looks To...</strong></td>
<td>the cross over and over and over again</td>
<td>a better life or easier life or nicer life or more obedient life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exposes</strong></td>
<td>the religious and the rebellious</td>
<td>only the rebellious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sorrow</strong></td>
<td>in response to the grace and love of the Father</td>
<td>in response to messing up or getting caught</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C: HOW TO MULTIPLY A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY

God is a missionary God. The Father sends the Son, and the Son sends the church in the power of the Spirit (John 20:21-22). As a sent people, multiplication is hard-wired into our identity as God’s people. Throughout the Scriptures when God sends, he also calls for multiplication.

1. Humanity was commissioned to reflect the image of God and was told to multiply (Genesis 1:28).
2. Abraham was sent to be a blessing to all families of the earth (Genesis 12:1-3) and he was promised that he would multiply (Genesis 22:17).
3. Abraham’s son, Isaac, was given the same promise of multiplication (Genesis 26:24).
4. Isaac’s son, Jacob, who was renamed Israel was commanded to multiply (Genesis 35:11).
5. God’s law was given to his missionary people upon entering the Promised Land so that they might multiply greatly (Deuteronomy 6:3).
6. When God’s people were exiled because of their sin, even then God reminded them of his heart to multiply them again (Jeremiah 30:19).
7. When Jesus sent the Spirit to his disciples, he made it clear the Spirit would empower them to multiply throughout the nations (Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8).
8. As the early church solved organizational problems, it led to great multiplication (Acts 6:1-7).
10. As the leading missionary, Paul, discipled Timothy, he expected Timothy to disciple others, outlining an ongoing strategy for multiplication (2 Timothy 2:2).

"Multiplication is hard-wired into our identity as God’s people."

Multiplication isn’t only something we do; it is part of our identity as missionaries of God. In light of this, we challenge missional communities to seek to multiply at least once each year.

A missional community multiplies by following three steps for healthy multiplication.
APPENDIX C: HOW TO MULTIPLY A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY (cont’d)

1. **V**ISION: the current core team articulates, prays for, and casts vision for multiplication.

   All missional communities should cast vision for multiplication from day one. Leaders should bring up multiplication regularly, especially at the beginning of gatherings and during prayer times. Lead your missional community to imagine multiplication and to ask God to multiply your MC for the sake of the gospel.

2. **I**NCUBATION: a new core team forms and incubates within the current MC.

   Incubation begins when a qualified leader and/or core team is called by God. The current MC helps to confirm its calling and helps prepare this new core team for their emerging mission. The emerging core team gets together for meals, prayer, and development of their identified mission – but they stay within their current MC until they are ready to multiply.

   How do you know when a new core team is ready? Answer: look for the essential marks and functions of a core team (see pages 10-16 of this Field Guide).

   As the MC members (and their coach) pray, listen to the Spirit, and work together, God makes his calling and timing clear. In our experience, most emerging core teams wait too long before launching. Multiplication is risky, but we follow a sovereign, sending God who has given us all we need for his mission.

3. **M**ULTIPLICATION: a new MC starts by celebrating the Spirit’s work in multiplication.

   Multiplication is not a divorce; it is a birth, and it must be celebrated! The first week of the new MC gathering, the sending MC attends and throws a party for the new MC.

   Why celebrate multiplication? Because God is calling people to himself, Jesus is building his church, and the Holy Spirit is bringing renewal! A new missional community means more people hearing the gospel message, joining gospel community, and being sent out on gospel mission. Taking time to throw a party and celebrate provides vision and encouragement to both the new MC and the sending MC.