



Missional Leadership.

Discussion Questions

We must say bluntly that when the church ceases to be a mission, then she openly denies the titles by which she is adorned in the New Testament.

Lesslie Newbigin

I can remember being a little kid and playing out at our family's favourite beach. One of my favourite things to do at the beach was make driftwood boats and play pirates or some made-up game. One time when we were at the beach, I was on my piece of driftwood, having an blast, when after 10 minutes or so, I looked up and noticed I was no longer near shore. I had drifted out to sea. It was too far for me to swim back and too far for my mom to come and get me.

A word I would use to describe my drift that day was subtle. I really didn't see it happening. It was silent, there was no fanfare about it, just a slow drift that took me from where I was supposed to be to a place I never wanted to go.

That's reality of something called *missional drift* in our churches. It's usually not something we set out to do or ever want to happen in the churches we lead. It isn't loud or intentional; it slowly happens over time. It lurks in the shadows of ministry, silently at work in churches, slowly taking place in quiet business of ministry. In fact, we usually don't notice it has been happening until we have that moment where we look up and realize we are not where we are supposed to be.

Missional drift is when our churches no longer are committed or focused on living out the mission of the church that Jesus has called us to (Matthew 28; Acts 1). If the bullseye on the target is making disciples, baptizing, and teaching all Christ has commanded, missional drift is seeing something else and making that the greatest priority in our churches. Now, that is a very black and white way of saying it, so please forgive me and we often don't even know it's there until we have that look up moment.

The Missional Leadership series was created to help you and me as leaders push against missional drift. The reality is, as leaders there are two frontlines we are fighting missional drift on. There's the frontline of our heart and our own personal relationship with Jesus and drift we can experience there. There is also the organizational frontline that we as leaders find ourselves on. In both context, drift happens and when it happens, it doesn't lead us closer to Jesus but further away, and the reality is no leader and no church is immune from it.

This is why I am so glad that you and the team you serve on are taking on this series. This series is designed to help us on both those fronts. It is there to help us as leaders ask some questions around our hearts and leadership but also around the church and where it is going? This is important for us because everything we do as leaders flows out of our relationship with Jesus and as we seek to have healthy churches, we must start with looking at having healthy leaders.

So, welcome to the Missional Leadership course. I am glad you are here, and I am praying God would use it to see His mission move forward in whatever context you find yourself in, but also in your own personal relationship with Jesus.



Luke Etelamaki
Discipleship Coach, SKMB



How this study guide works.

This study guide is here to help prime the pumps for discussion around your leadership table. You know the leadership team you are a part of, you know the needs of the church and the context you are in, so please use these questions as a spring board to dive deeper. To help with that, if you are the facilitator, I would encourage you preview each session to see if it speaks to your context in a unique way.

To get the most out of each session, there is some homework for each member of the team to do on their own before each session. This homework is meant to help get each leader thinking about the up topic but from a slightly different vantage point.

Finally, each session has some extra resources that might help you or your team dive deeper into the topic at hand. Again, this course is meant to be a primer on Missional Leadership, so there is plenty of space to dive deeper and explore each topic.

Heart Before Parts

Pre-Session Homework

1. Spend some time reading 1 Samuel 16:1;7-13. As you read it, write out five things that stand out to you from the passage.
2. What does this passage reveal about what we look for in leaders versus what God is looking for in leaders.
3. What does it mean in verse 7 when it says, "The Lord looks on the heart"? If you are struggling, spend some time reading 1 Timothy 3:1-7. What matters most to Paul when it comes to leader in the church?
4. What are some practical things you do in your life to help you grow in a deeper love for Jesus?

Leaders Discussion

1. What would be some characteristics of a church where the leaders are leading out of the Gospel?
2. As a church, what do you perceive to be critical as we look for leaders – gifting or heart? Explain why.
3. On a scale of 1-10 (1 being not great and 10 being out of this world), how would you rate your personal life with Jesus right now? What metrics are you using to grade yourself?
4. What would be some spiritual disciplines that come natural to you and what would be some disciplines that are extremely hard for you participate in? How can we encourage one another in the areas of struggle?
5. Character is often revealed in community. What would the people closest to you identify about your character? What have people already identified, and how has that helped you grow?

Christian leadership requires both spiritual maturity and emotional maturity to care for the church of God. An emotionally unsound leaders or board member can derail an entire organization.

Scott Thomas
The Gospel Shaped Leader

We never "get beyond the gospel" to something more advanced. The gospel is not the first step in a stairway of truths; rather, it is more like the hub in a wheel of truth. The gospel is not just the ABCs but the A to Z of Christianity.

Tim Keller
The Centrality Of The Gospel



For Going Deeper

You're Not Crazy
Season One, Podcast

How to Grow
by Darryl Dash

The Gospel Shaped Leader
by Scott Thomas

The Making of a Leader
by Dr. J. Robert Clinton

Leaders and the Church

Pre-Session Homework

1. Read Mark 10:35-45. As you read it, write out five things that stand out to you from this passage.
2. What is one major leadership principle that flows out of this passage? What does it look like for you to apply this principle to your leadership?
3. Read verse 45. How does the Gospel encourage us as leaders when we struggle to be servant leaders?

Leaders Discussion

1. When have you seen a leader fall into one of the four seductions Luke talked about in the session? What did it lead to in their lives?
2. Entitlement, comfort, greed, affirmation... What might be some clues that these are alive and well in a leader's life?
3. How do you think a deep understanding of the Gospel can help us defeat the temptation to fall into these seductions?
4. What does sacrificial love for the church look like for leaders? In what ways can we grow in this?
5. In what ways do you think these four seductions, when being pursued by a leader, lead to missional drift in the local church?

If we're not careful, our leadership role within the church can cause us to become critics, not lovers, of the church. When we become critics, we forfeit our leadership of the church we're called to love and lead.

Darrel Dash

All of us have the tendency in our sin to become very skilled self-swindlers... If you aren't daily admitting to yourself that you are a mess and in daily and rather desperate need for forgiving and transforming grace... you are going to give yourself to the work of convincing yourself that you are okay.

Paul David Tripp



For Going Deeper

You're Not Crazy
Season One, Podcast

Dangerous Calling
by Paul David Tripp

The Gospel-Driven Ministry
by Jared C Wilson

Stick Teams
by Larry Osborne

Uncomfortable
by Brett McCracken

Pre-Session Homework

1. Spend time dreaming of the perfect church. What would it look like? What would be some of the ministries that would take place? What kind of music would be played for worship? What would discipleship look like? What would the theology look like? Be prepared to give a snapshot of your dream church to your fellow leadership team when you meet.
2. Read Matthew 25:12-30 a number of times. Take a few notes about what stands out to you in this passage in relationship to stewardship of God's church.

Leaders Discussion

1. Have leaders go around the room and describe their dream church.
2. What we think we want from a church is almost never what we need. Why would our dream churches most likely struggle to grow us deeper in our faith?
3. What are some of the challenges being stewards? Where do you find the temptation in leadership to act like owners of the church?
4. Read Matthew 28:18-20. Here we encounter some of God's vision for His church. Take some time as a team and list God's vision for His church.
5. How can you, as stewards of Jesus' bride, best see God's vision come to life in your context?
6. Think back to Matthew 25:12-30. What led the "slothful" servant to not be faithful? How does our understanding of our master influence how we steward what we have been entrusted with?

Those who love their dream of a Christian community more than they love the Christian community itself become destroyers of that Christian community even though their personal intentions may be ever so honest, earnest and sacrificial.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

God grows his kingdom only as we take our hands off of what little portion he's given to us, "die" to our control of it, and plant it into the world. That just feels scary to us.

JD Greear



For Going Deeper

The One Thing Podcast

Gaining By Losing
by JD Greear

Deep Discipleship
by JT English

The Gospel-Driven Church
by Jared C Wilson

Beautiful Resistance
by Jon Tyson

Mission & Mission Drift (Pt. 1)

Pre-Session Homework

1. Complete the following statement: The mission of the church is _____. In your answer, go into some detail and explain how this would take place in your local context. As much as possible, connect what you write to Scripture that reflects God's desire and vision for the church. For example, what role would small groups play? Will you need leadership development? How will you engage with non-Christians? What Scripture would inform you of these convictions?
2. The Great Commission is both corporate but also individual. What does mission look like in your own life? How are you personally living out the Great Commission?

Without the mission, a church is not a church; it's just a group of disobedient Christians hanging out.

JD Greear

Jesus did not give a mission to his church; he formed a church for his mission.

Christopher Wright

Leaders Discussion

1. On the Bell Curve of the Church Life Cycle, spend some time assessing where you are as a church. Around the leadership table, is there a common agreement on the stage of life of your church? If there are differences, begin to explore why.
2. What concerns come to light as you see what life stage your church is at?
3. Luke talked about *Golden Calf Ministries*. Do you have any in your church? What needs to be done to address these as you look ahead?
4. As a leadership team, discuss your mission for the church. Do you as a team know it? Does it need to be updated? Is it actively being lived out in your church? Why or why not?



For Going Deeper

The One Thing Podcast

Gaining By Losing
by JD Greear

Essentialism
by Greg McKeown

The Gospel-Driven Church
by Jared C Wilson

Total Church
by Chester & Timmis

A Failure of Nerve
by Edwin Friedman

Mission & Mission Drift (Pt. 2)

Pre-Session Homework

1. When you think about the main role of leaders in the church, what comes to mind?
2. Spend some time reading Ephesians 4:11-16. How do these verses either confirm or challenge your understanding of the role of leaders in the church?
3. Why is the “equipping of the saints” so key to the mission of the church?
4. What are some ways you can begin to live out the call to equip as a leader in the church?

Churches that want to penetrate their world with the Gospel think less about the Sunday morning bang and more about equipping their members to blast a hole in the mountain of lostness.

JD Greear

Leaders Discussion

1. As you watched this week’s and last week’s sessions on mission, how have you noticed pride come up in your heart and life? What emotions do you experience that would reveal pride?
2. To see missional drift, we first have to know what the mission (target) is. What is the mission of the church? Can each leader around the table describe the role they play in seeing the church move towards the mission?
3. Have everyone take out a piece a paper and spend 3-5 minutes writing out what your church will look like in 3-5 years if you remain focused to the mission God has called your church to. Go around the table and share. Is the vision similar or different? If everyone’s vision is different around the table, it’s a sign that missional drift has taken place and you are no longer moving together. Ask some questions around why there is a difference around the table. If needed, you might need to pause and begin to ask the vision question and discuss this in greater detail.
4. Spend some time talking about how... How are you going to see this vision accomplished as a church? What tactics need to be discussed? What tactics need to be changed?



For Going Deeper

The One Thing Podcast

Gaining By Losing
by JD Greear

Total Church
by Chester & Timmis

God Dreams
by Mancini & Bird

Pre-Session Homework

1. This is the last session! Take some time to reflect on the previous session. What have been one or two key takeaways?
2. Spend some time thinking through the fruit of the Gospel in a person's life but also in a church's life. What do you think this fruit would look like personally but also for a church?

Leaders Discussion

1. What metrics do you currently use as leaders to measure church health? Do you think they portray an accurate reality of the church? Why or why not?
2. What does your metrics reveal about where your church is going?
3. In your homework, you were asked to think through what the fruit of the Gospel looks like. Go around the table and share some of your thoughts. If you were to create a list of what Gospel fruit in your church would look like, what would be on it?
4. What steps do you, as leaders, need to take to either create or revamp your metrics? Put together a game plan to get this in place over the next month.

So how do we extricate ourselves and our churches from the spirit of consumerism and pragmatism that has infected the church and reclaim the essence of biblical Christianity? What we need is to repent of decades of relying upon pragmatic methodology and materialist theology and to reclaim the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ as the power of salvation for anybody, anywhere, anytime. The United States, in particular, desperately needs churches to recommit to the countercultural supernaturalism of biblical Christianity. This entails a greater commitment to rely on the Spirit working through his prescribed mean, not ours.

Jared C Wilson
The Gospel-Driven Church



For Going Deeper

The One Thing Podcast

Center Church
by Tim Keller

Essentialism
by Greg McKeown

The Gospel-Driven Church
by Jared C Wilson

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