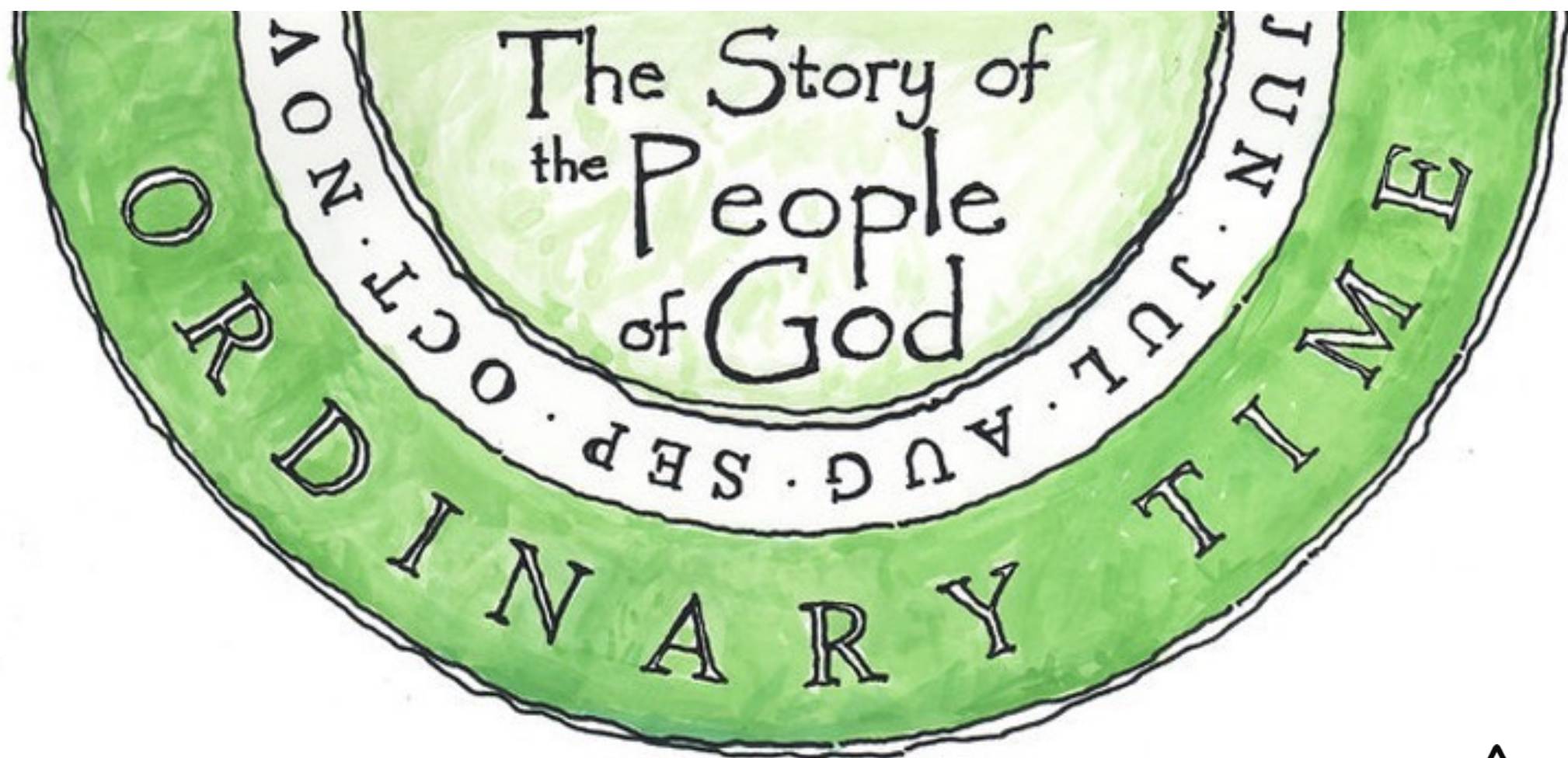


God of all who wander in the wilderness:
go before us as beacon and guide.
Lead us through all danger,
sustain us through all desolation,
and bring us home to the land
you have prepared for us.
Amen.

Opening Prayer





GOOD/BEAUTIFUL COMMUNITY

The *Christ-Centered* Community

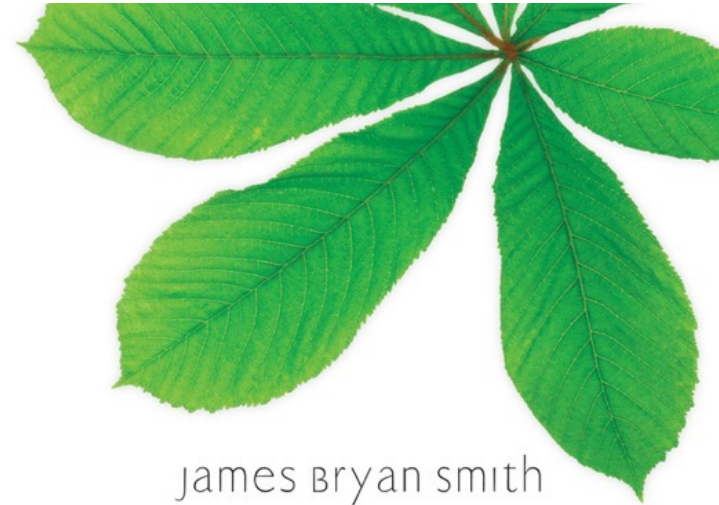
The *Worshipping* Community

The *Reconciling* Community

The *Hopeful* Community

The *Encouraging* Community

The *Serving* Community



james bryan smith

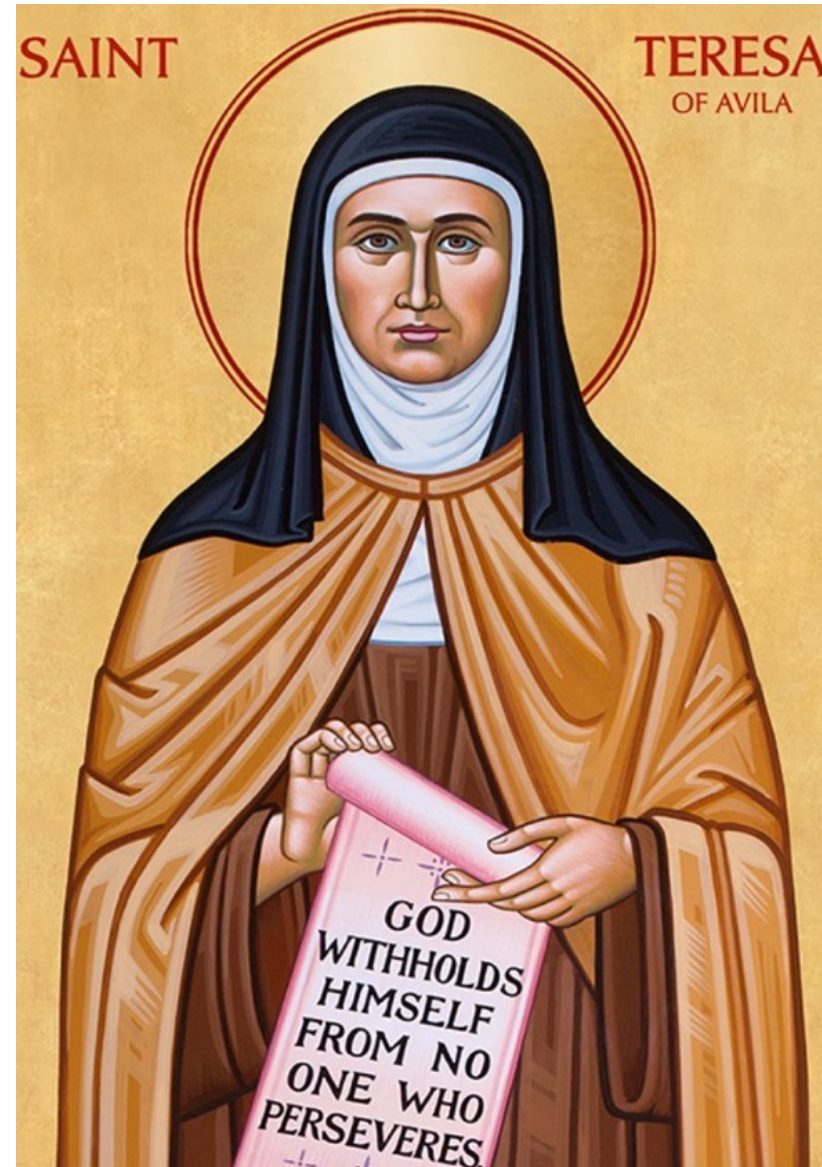
the good and beautiful COMMUNITY

FOLLOWING THE SPIRIT, EXTENDING GRACE,
DEMONSTRATING LOVE

"The best practice I have seen in Christian spiritual formation."

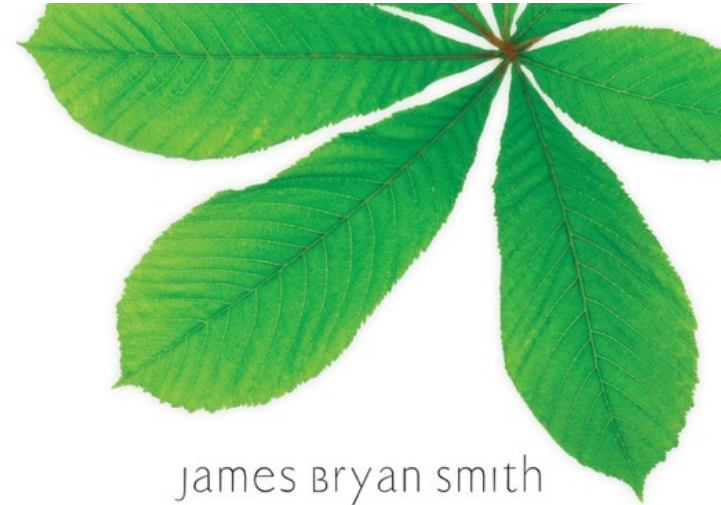
—DALLAS WILLARD

Christ has no body now on earth
but yours, no hands but yours,
no feet but yours. Yours are
the eyes through which Christ's
compassion looks out to the
world. Yours are the feet with
which he goes about doing good.
Yours are the hands with which
he blesses all humankind today.



FALSE NARRATIVE

Our needs matter the most



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The problem comes when the most important consideration, the dominant desire, and the main focus of a community, is its own success. Just as (someone) whose whole life is focused on meeting his/her needs becomes narcissistic, self-centered, ineffective and ultimately unhappy, so also can (churches) lose their souls.



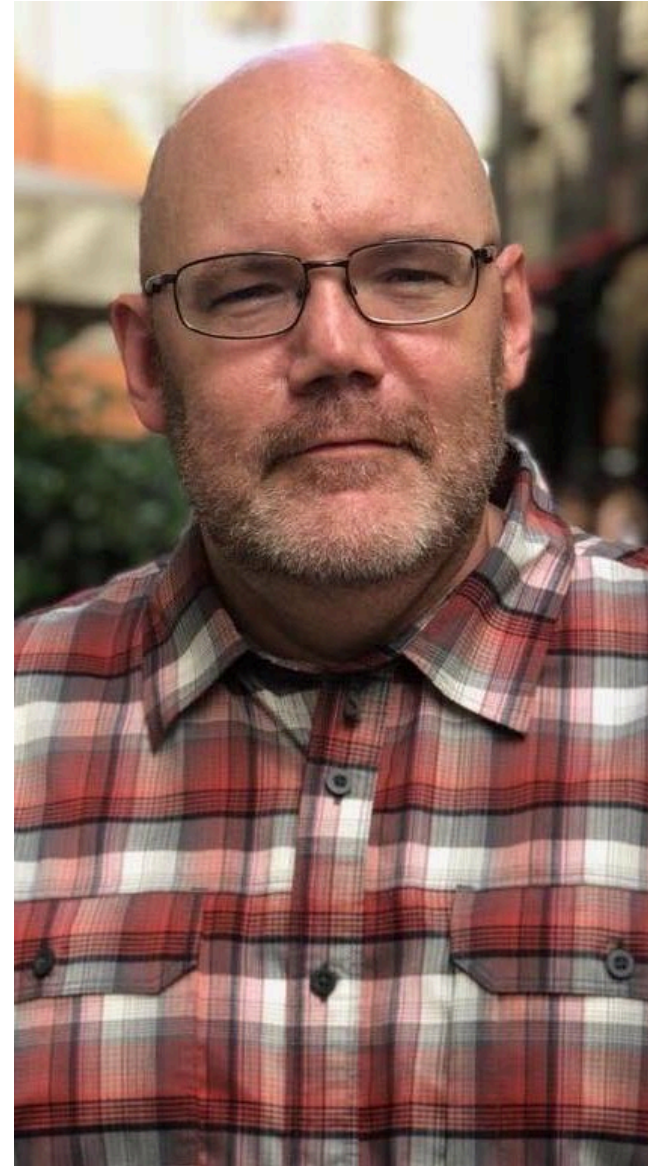
JAMES BRYAN
SMITH

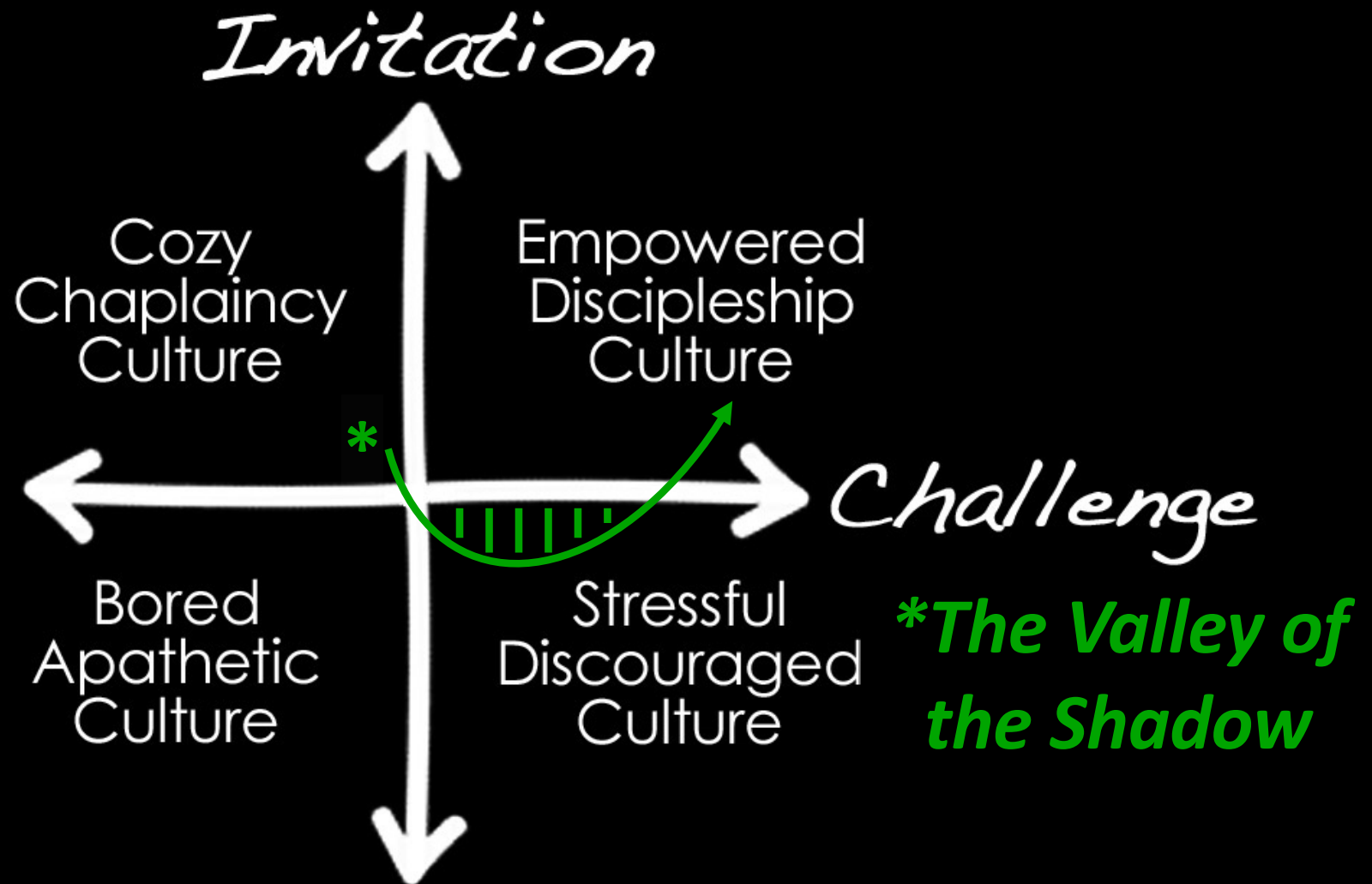
When that happens, the larger vision that brought the community into existence has been eclipsed, and the community no longer exists to fulfill its original mission, but simply to stay alive.



Smith identifies two big questions churches can ask themselves:

- 1. What can we do to improve **OURSELVES?** -vs-*
- 2. How can we serve **OTHERS?***



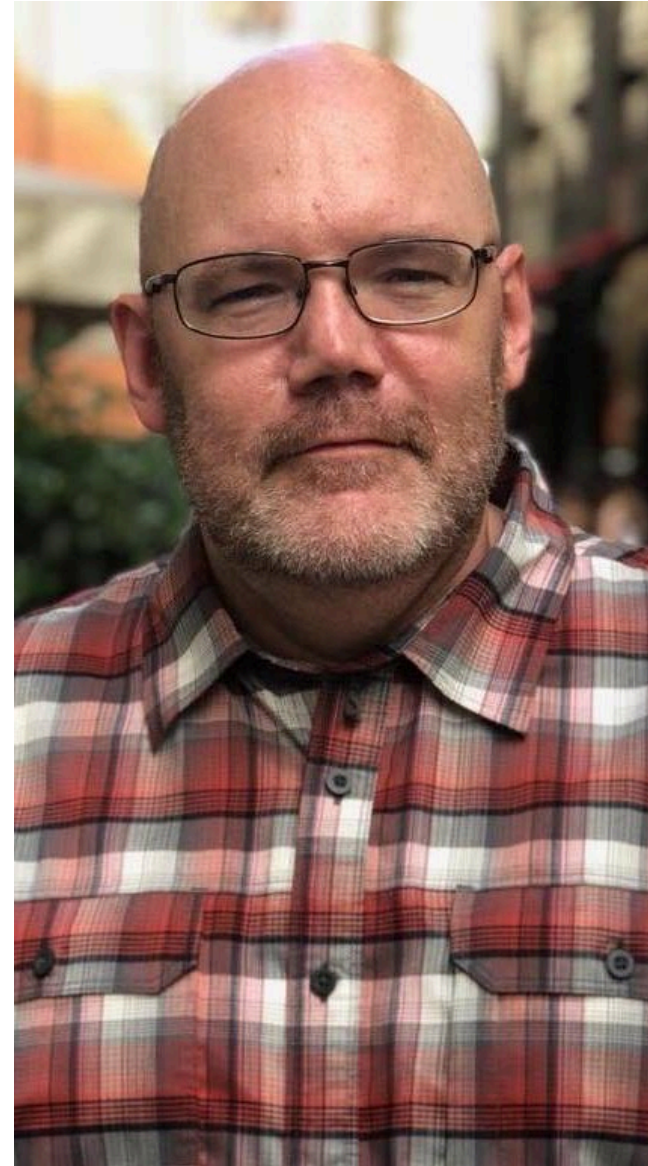


Smith identifies two big questions churches can ask themselves:

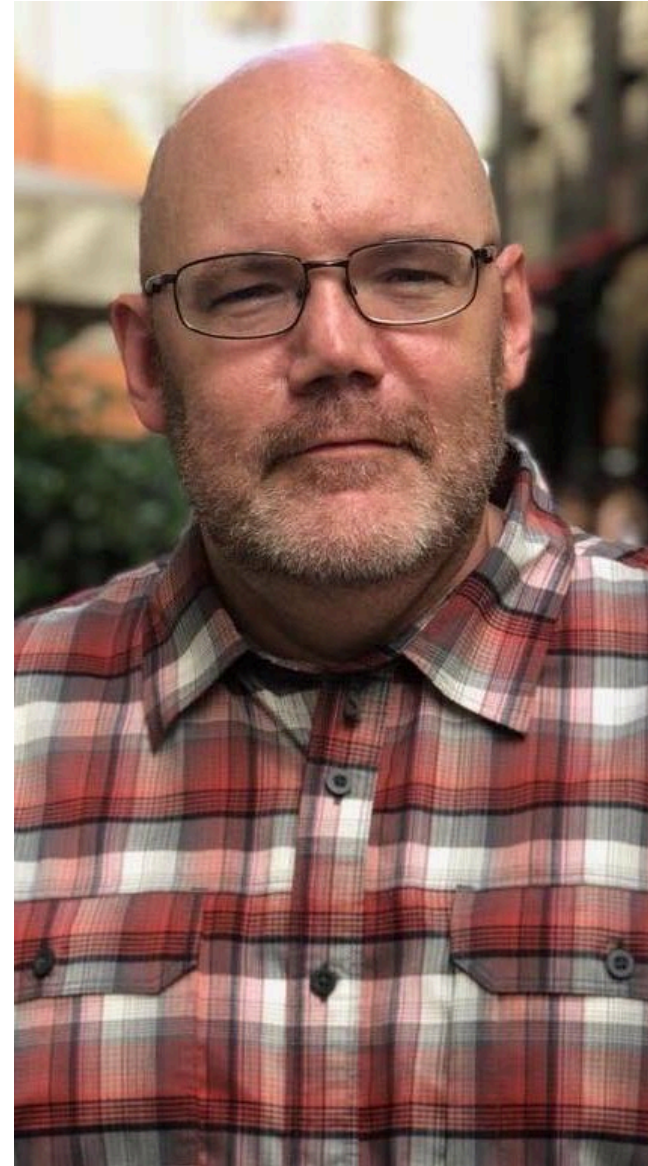
- 1. What can we do to improve **OURSELVES**? -vs-*
- 2. How can we serve **OTHERS**?*

I think there's a relevant third:

- 3. How can we improve **OURSELVES** to better serve **OTHERS**?*



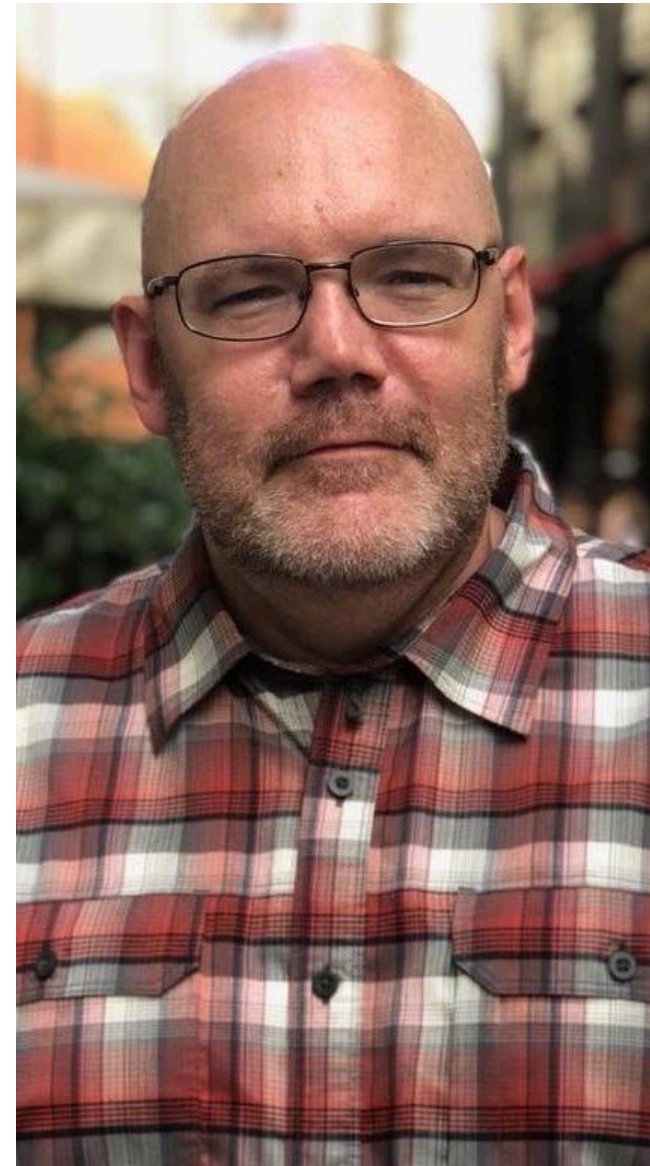
I believe the dream of a building that is fully accessible – or at least on its way to *becoming* that way – reflects the spirit of that question. Deciding to make accessibility improvements to our building makes the building better for everyone: in our church, in this neighborhood, and in our community as a whole.





Other *possible* improvements:

- Ramp to the basement
- Wider doorways downstairs
- Accessible bathroom downstairs
- Heightened hand rails on our Sanctuary stairs
- Safer stairs/railing to the west-side door and basement
- Movable front-row chairs

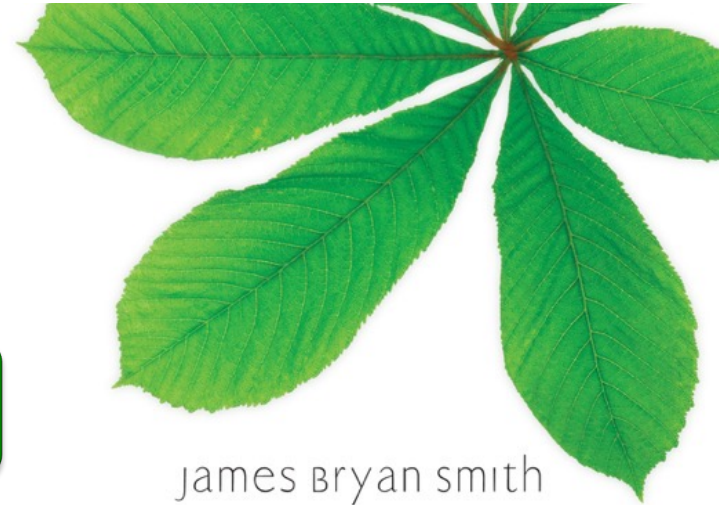


FALSE NARRATIVE

Our needs matter the most

TRUE NARRATIVE

Others' needs matter the most



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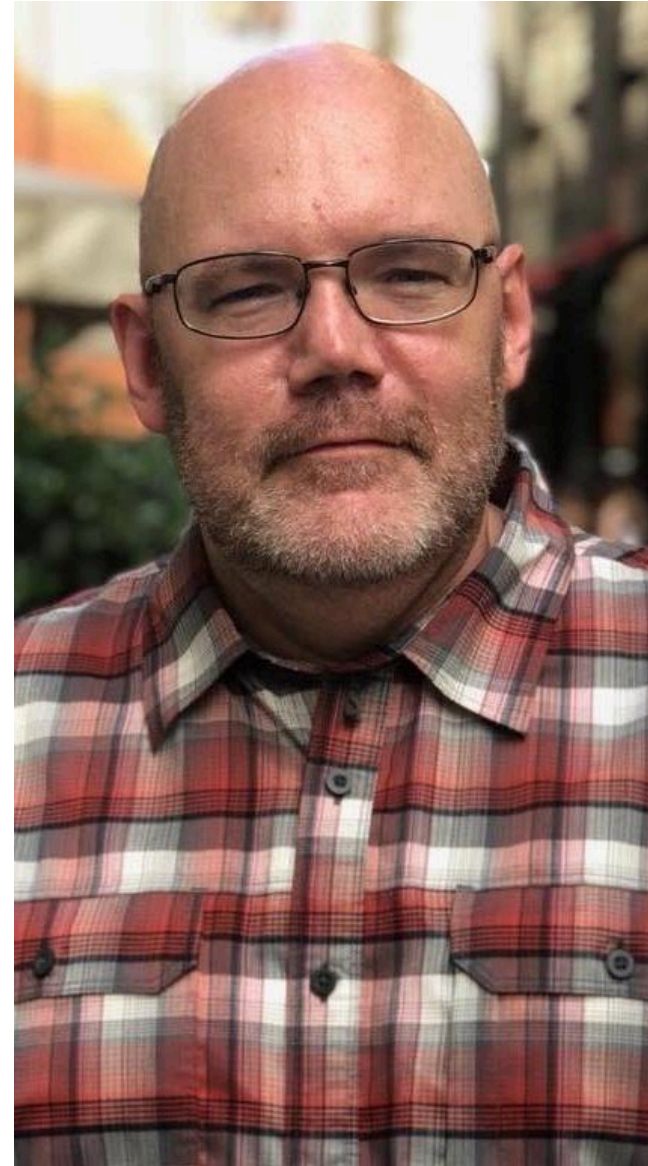
—DALLAS WILLARD

*Do nothing from selfish ambition
or conceit, but in humility regard
others as better than yourselves.
Let each of you look not **only** to your own
interests, but to the interests of others.*

HOLY
BIBLE

PHIL
2:3-4

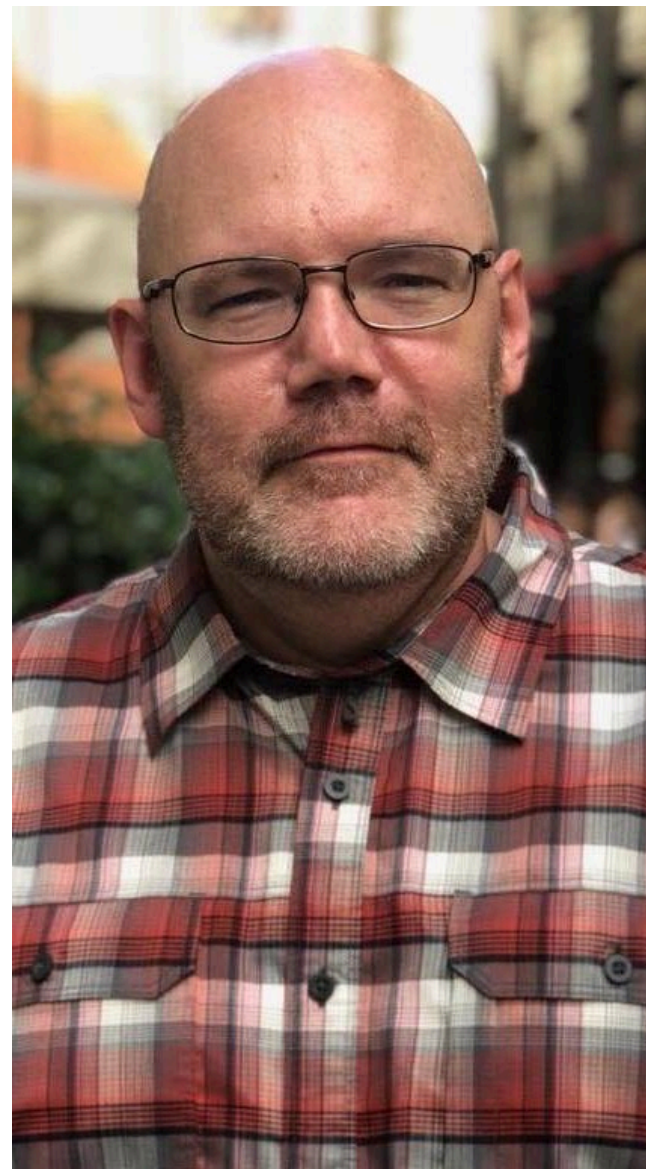
It's not about feeling "bad" about yourself, or denying your needs as a human being, or becoming a doormat for others. As we will discover in the next, and last, part of our series, Jesus tells us to "*love our neighbors as ourselves*," which presupposes that we love ourselves. Paul just really wants us to look out for the needs of others as well!



It is possible to spend too much time caring for our own needs, and it is common to see people spending too much time caring for the needs of others. (But I believe) it is possible to strike a healthy balance if we listen to the leading of the Spirit and are open to the discernment of others who can see things we may not see.



It is possible for churches to spend too much money on their buildings, and it's possible to underestimate how important a safe, welcoming, accessible space can actually be. We have been a part of churches that were extravagant when it came to its own physical space, and with little thought to accessibility.





Today, disabled people still don't have the same rights as abled people in U.S. churches or Christian schools. Those institutions are exempt from the ADA. It didn't happen by accident or loophole, though. They actively fought against being legally accountable to provide access to disabled people...



William Bentley Ball, representing the Association of Christian Schools International, lobbied against ADA, arguing there was no compelling state interest in religious orgs being accessible...In essence, his logic declared that there was no good reason for Christian organizations to be accessible to people with disabilities.



The outcome of exempting Christian churches and schools from the ADA has been threefold. First, most Christian education programs have only served abled students. Second, no other religions made similar arguments (against the ADA), so Christians stood alone against access for disabled people...



Finally, this outcome communicated to the disability community that they did not belong in mainstream U.S. Christianity, as churches either actively opposed the ADA or passively didn't abide by it because they weren't required to do so legally.

Go in peace

to love and to serve

And let your ears ring long
with what you have heard

And may the bread
on your tongue

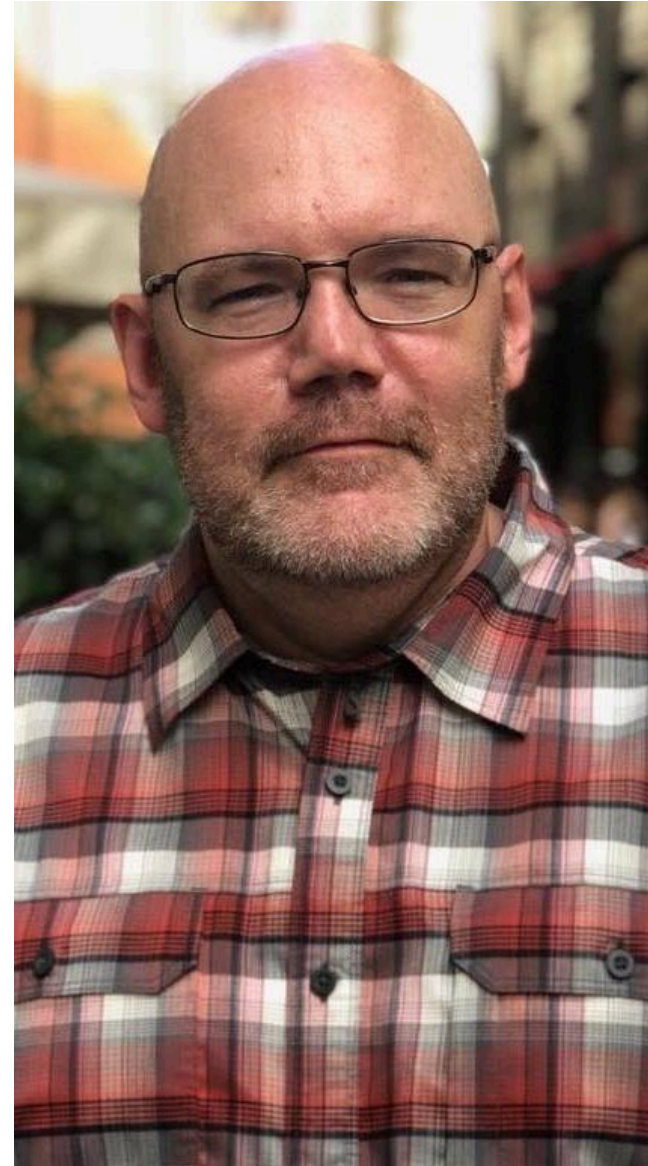
Leave a trail of crumbs

To lead the hungry back

to the place you are from



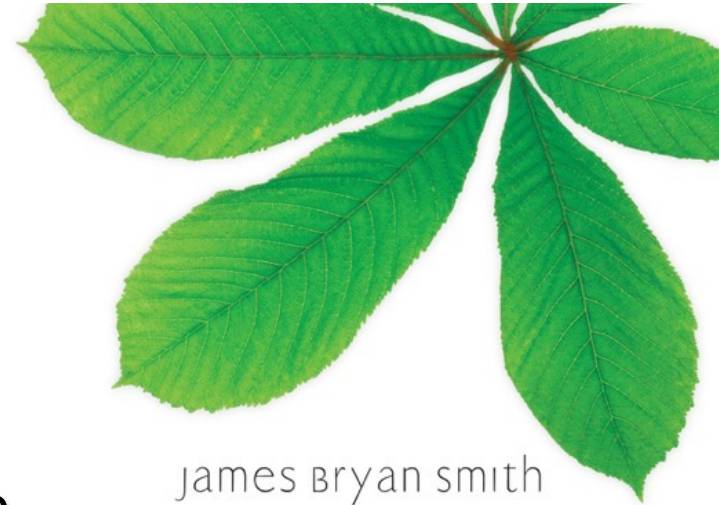
As far as Vintage is concerned,
I am confident – no matter what
happens in our future – we will do
our very best to approach building-
related decisions with accessibility,
functionality, financial wisdom,
and the leading of the Spirit
in mind, as we seek to improve
our space in a way that helps us
better serve our community.



SOUL TRAINING EXERCISE

Putting others first could mean:

- Let others pick the place to eat*
- Do a “kid’s choice” activity w/them
- Bring some drinks/treats to work
- Park further away if you can
- Offer to serve before being asked
- Let others get in line ahead of you



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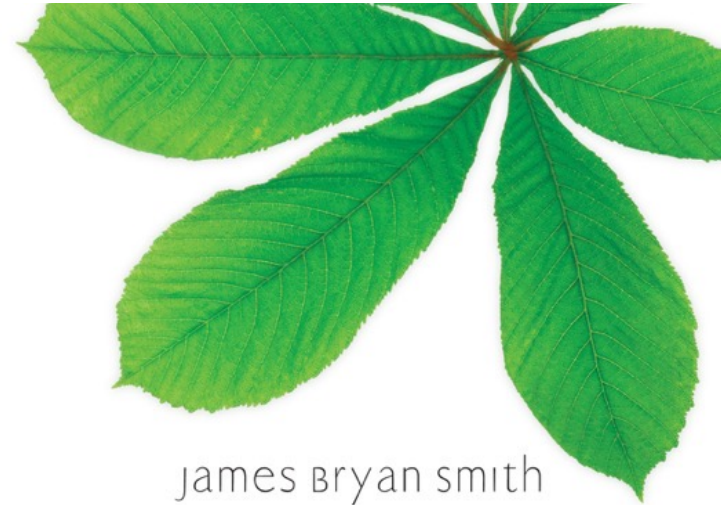
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MORTGAGE

Payoff



MORTGAGE

Payoff

AMOUNT RAISED: \$11,745



MORTGAGE

Payoff

AMOUNT RAISED: \$11,745

Anonymous Matching Gift: \$5,000



MORTGAGE

Payoff

AMOUNT RAISED: \$11,745

Anonymous Matching Gift: \$5,000

TOTAL RAISED = \$16,745



MORTGAGE

Payoff

AMOUNT RAISED: \$11,745

Anonymous Matching Gift: \$5,000

TOTAL RAISED = \$16,745

PAYOFF = \$15,700 (+\$1,045!!!) Building Fund



MORTGAGE BURNING CEREMONY!

Halloween Potluck Fire Pit // Saturday, 10.31

Nothing Says Halloween Like a Mortgage Burning!