

## **Corporate Spiritual Health and Dynamics:**

### *Fervent Kingdom Prayer*

“Prayer is the walkie-talkie that the Christian and the church uses as it engages in the battle of advancing God’s Kingdom.” - Adapted from John Piper

Fervent faith-filled prayer that boldly asks God to act in ways that go far beyond human abilities and resources has been the hallmark of every period of advancement in the Kingdom of God. The Church was launched out of a prayer meeting after Jesus’ ascension and before the Spirit was given at Pentecost. So we need to repent of (1) fatalism (which says God will do what he has planned to do, so we will not risk telling him what to do by praying), and (2) practical deism (where we act as if God were remote and disinterested in our lives). Our giving ourselves to prayer is the surest mark of our vital dependency upon God and the resources of the Spirit for life and ministry.

### *Gospel-Centered Worship and Preaching*

“Worship is the supremacy of God in the affections of His people.” - John Piper

“The church is founded upon the Word of Christ given through the apostles, and the spread of the church is the spread of the Word. Just as the reading and preaching of the Bible mark the existence of the church, so they also mold its worship.” - Edmund Clowney

The worship of the early church had corporate form. In Acts 2:42, Paul literally says that “they devoted themselves to the breaking of the bread and the prayers”. This is almost certainly a reference to ‘liturgy’ – to the service of the Lord’s Supper and to a discipline of praying called “the prayers.” It was not random, but organized and ordered. Their worship had both an informal and formal aspect, as the believers gathered both in homes and in the temple courts (v.46). This surely means that there was both informal worship in the small group and more formal worship in the large group.

### *In-Depth Learning and Discipleship*

“Developing the mind of Christ.” - Richard Lovelace

Life in the early church was intense. “Devoted themselves” (v.42) means that there was a high commitment to learning. Spirit-filled is not set over against the intellect. Learning and discipling were completely centered on the “apostolic teaching.” It was not learning in general, but rather the study of God’s revelation as it came through the apostles. Today, of course, the apostles’ teaching is in the Scriptures. With the Scriptures as our guidebook, the goal of the church’s learning and discipling is three-fold: (1) to know the Lord, (2) to do His will, and (3) to become like Him.

### *Fellowship: Building Authentic Relationships*

“Uniting with the body of Christ in community.” - Richard Lovelace

As intensely as the early church was committed to the apostolic teaching, they equally “devoted themselves. . . to fellowship” (v.42). It was not something that just happened. They worked at it. This implies accountability with one another, a sense of responsibility to care and support and guide each other. It was daily (“every day” v.46). They did not just see each other on Sundays, but were involved in each other’s daily lives. It was economic as well as spiritual (“had everything in common” v.44). They recognized not only that other brothers and sisters had a claim on their time and heart but also on their resources.

Fellowship was small group/house church based. (“They broke bread in their homes” v.46). If we put this together with statements like Acts 20:20 and greetings to “the church that meets in their house” in I Cor. 16:9 and elsewhere – we can see the importance of small group community in the early church. They had regular meetings where this same set of ministries – learning, loving, worshipping – was conducted at the mini-level, so as to supplement what was happening at the “maxi” large group level.

### *Relentless Evangelism: Witnessing in Word*

“Following Christ into the world with the Gospel.” - Richard Lovelace

“Witness is by life as well as by word, but never without the Word of God.” – Edmund Clowney

In the Acts church there were conversions “daily” (v.47). It was based on demonstration through community. One reason that people were saved is that the love and note of praising was highly attractive to “all the people” (v.47). This cannot mean that every non-Christian loved the early church – there was plenty of persecution. But it meant that over all the early church demonstrated the gospel in its community in such a way that was irresistible to outside observers.

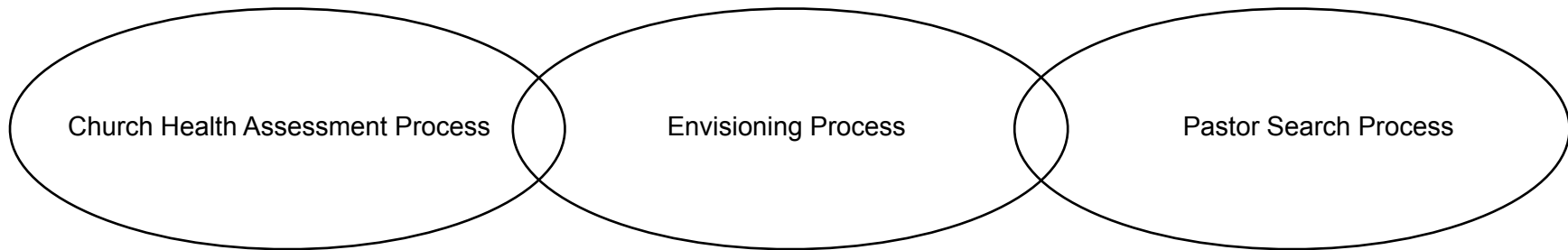
*Mercy and Justice Ministries (Deed Ministries):*

“Sacrificial service in word and deed.”

The church’s witness integrates both word and deed. Acts 2:44 seems to indicate that the economic sharing was mainly practiced among Christians. But we know the early church did not confine its deed ministry only to Christians. Paul says in Galatians 6:10 that Christians should “do good to all, especially the household of faith.” Their sharing was heavier inside the community, but their generosity went outside the church as well.

[These categories were articulated by Richard Lovelace whom I did my D. Min. Study. This language is adapted from sections of Tim Keller’s Acts as modified by Steve Childers found in his church planting course.]

# Flourish Church Transition Process



Questions answered in this phase:

1. Where have we been? (Our history)
2. Where are we? (Our real present state)

Questions answered in this phase:

3. Who are we? (Our identity, values, and Spiritual Gifts)
4. Where are we going? (Our vision/direction)

Question answered in this phase:

5. **Who**, can take **us, there**? (In light of who we are and where we are going what kind of leader should we seek?)

# Flourish

A large, leafy tree stands on a grassy hill under a cloudy sky. The tree is the central focus, with its branches spreading out. The grass is vibrant green and appears to be blowing in the wind. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, creating a serene and natural atmosphere.

## Church Health Assessment



**Do you know if your church is healthy?**

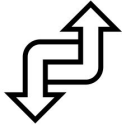


## **FROM A CHURCH HEALTH ASSESSMENT YOU CAN LEARN:**

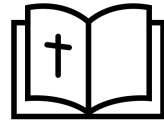
- Who your congregation aspires to be
- Who they are functionally now
- Where they are hurting
- What they think about Christianity
- How they perceive leadership
- What is unique about your church's community
- How to better love your church

# KEY SECTIONS

Biblical  
Cultural  
Dynamics



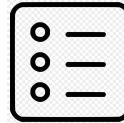
Doctrinal  
Assessment



Community  
Context



Insights and  
Recommendations





# Biblical Cultural Dynamics



**Who does your congregation aspire to be?**

**Who are they functional now?**

**Biblical Cultural Dynamics** reveal the culture of your congregation and assesses their attitudes and behaviors toward the following aspects of living their faith:

Great Commission

Gospel Centrality

Greatest Commandment: Love for God

Greatest Commandment: Love for Neighbor within the church

Greatest Commandment: Love for Neighbor outside the church

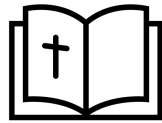
Biblical Church Membership

Biblical Leadership

Means of Grace

Reformation and Transformation

# Doctrinal Assessment



**What does your congregation believe about the Christianity?**

The doctrinal assessment reveals how your congregation thinks about Christianity by asking them how much they agree with broadly evangelical statements of faith, e.g.,

- The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God.
- Jesus' death on the cross really and fully paid for the sins of his people.
- There is only one true God, existing in three persons: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Jesus was born of the virgin Mary and lived a sinless life.
- Jesus actually died on the cross and literally rose from the dead.

# Community Context

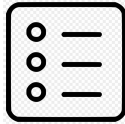


## Who is our neighbor?

Community context provides key insights into where God has placed your church. It includes demographic information about your neighbors, city, in relationship to your congregation. Churches have learned things such as:

- One in three parents in their community are single
- Church attendees don't reflect the neighborhood where they meet in age, race, income, or education
- OTHER?

# Insights and Recommendations



## What's important and what might we do?

Flourish uses all the data and information we gather, synthesizes it, and prayerfully considers what insights are most important for you to act on near, medium and long-term. Below is an abbreviated insight and recommendation:

**Insight:** Willingness to sacrifice relational comfort is a barrier to personally sharing the Gospel.

**Recommendation:** Host an hour-long leadership listening session where congregants are invited to talk about their fears when it comes to sharing the Gospel. Leaders simply listen and take notes without offering advice. In the last ten minutes of the meeting, leadership can ask one question: can we have one or two people talk about how Christ comforted them when sharing the Gospel didn't go well?

# **THE CHURCH HEALTH ASSESSMENT INCLUDES**

Biblical Cultural Dynamics

Doctrinal assessment

Leadership assessment

Research interviews

Demographic assessment

SWOT Analysis

Recommendations

*An expert is a man who has made all the mistakes which can be made, in a narrow field. Niels Bohr*



### **Matt Bohling**

#### **Co-Founder of Flourish, Executive Director**

Converted in college out of a pagan background, Matt has been in ministry for nearly 30 years. Sixteen of those years were joyously spent as the pastor of two different PCA churches. Matt has been married for 26 years to the wonderful Julianne who courageously bore four children (Jacob 22, Jesse 20, Joseph 18, and Joy 12).. Matt lives in the woods on the shores of Lake Coeur d'Alene in North Idaho. He serves as the Executive Director of Flourish, a ministry designed to help pastors and their churches get unstuck by helping them find clarity and give them gospel hope.



# Flourish

Freeing leaders to be effective  
wherever God has placed them.

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