

LIVING

THE

STORY



A DANGEROUS QUESTION....

Have you ever found yourself thinking “Really? Is this it? Sunday morning worship and weekly small groups? Is this really what it’s all about? Come on...please tell me there is more...please...” At some point all of us will have this conversation with ourselves. If you don’t, then something’s wrong. Looking to a sage on the stage eventually runs its course and leaves wondering: what now?

We believe there is more...much more. The story of Jesus is about a permanent revolution – a continuous movement that has the power to transform every person in every place. The good news is that we don’t have to start a movement. We are already in the movement Jesus started. The challenge we face is knowing how to participate in that movement.

Participating in the Movement

A movement is a story that gets relived over and over again. Think about it, every time we say what Jesus says, and do what Jesus did, we are reliving his story in our lives. The movement of Jesus continues to this day because people everywhere continue to re-tell and re-live his story in their lives. In fact, if no one said what Jesus said, or did what Jesus did, then the movement would eventually die out.

Sadly, in some places, his movement is dying out. Even here in Nashville, what some would call the buckle of the Bible belt, the church is on the decline. With what seems like a church on every corner, how can this be? The simple answer is: we have stopped living the story of Jesus in our own lives. The church has been focused on what I like to call the “red letter” Jesus. In other words, people are spending more time on what Jesus *said* than on what he *did*. But you can’t separate the message of Jesus from the methods of Jesus.

At OneLife, we want to focus on the “red letter” and the “black letter” Jesus. We want to live out both the message and the methods of Jesus. One of our guiding questions is: What would it look like for Jesus’ story to shape our story?

**We have to look at
the black letters
and the red letters.**

The Jesus Movement

When Jesus started his public ministry, the religious landscape was filled with a diversity of religious groups - Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes and Zealots to name a few. Each one of these groups told a different story about how to bring about change. To varying degrees, each group made their mark, for better or worse, on the culture of their day. However, for the most part, their efforts to bring about change were largely unsuccessful.

Jesus stepped onto this diverse religious landscape and, interestingly enough, chose not to adopt any of those existing strategies. More of the same would only lead to...well...more of the same. No, Jesus came to start something new, something that would change the world like never before.

The New Message of Jesus

Every movement has a message, a compelling vision of what can and should be. Jesus' message was *The kingdom of God is at hand – repent and believe the gospel*. Hmm...that's interesting. At this point, Jesus has not died or risen from the dead, and yet he is talking about believing in the gospel. Huh?

The good news, in a nutshell, is that God, through Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit, breaks in and changes reality. He can take anything that has gone wrong, and through His transformative presence, start making it right...anything...

Do you believe this? That God can break into every area of brokenness and start healing it? Your family? Your neighborhood? Your city? How do we know God can do this? Because he did it first in Jesus...a real human being, just like us. Through his life, death, and resurrection, God started making all things new. He wants to do the same thing with us. This is good news!

So how do we participate in Jesus' work of making all things new? Jesus says we start by repenting. The word repent is *metanoia*, which means to zoom out and look at *how* we are looking. In other words, he is inviting us into a process of re-visioning who we are and where we are going. God wants us to start seeing Him, ourselves, people...everything...from a new perspective...his perspective. When we align our vision with his, we open ourselves up to experience the good news of the kingdom.

**The gospel, in short,
is that God reigns,
through Jesus, by
the power of the
Holy Spirit.**

The New Methods of Jesus

One of the basic assumptions I make about Jesus is that I can't improve on *what* he did, or *how* he did it. This means every part of his life and leadership is worth imitating, and this is especially true when it comes to making disciples. Let's take a look.

What if we let Jesus disciple us into being better disciple makers?

Once Jesus started proclaiming and demonstrating the gospel of the kingdom, he immediately began to invite people into discipling relationships. He said to Peter and Andrew *follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men*. Jesus was not the first person to make disciples. For example, the Pharisees and John the Baptist made disciples as well. Discipling relationships were already a part of their culture.¹ When Jesus invited Peter and Andrew to follow him, they knew the kind of relationship they were being invited into. It was a leader-follower relationship where they would be supported and stretched to become all that God created them to be.

And what did Jesus invite them to become? Fishers of people! Jesus invited them into a relational process where they would become the kind of people that others would want to follow. Their lives would be changed by the transformative presence of God, and through their relationship with Jesus, they would learn how to invite other people into that same transformative experience. This is how movements are born.

Organic and Organized

Jesus took both an organic and an organized approach to making disciples. It was organic because Jesus shared his life with the 12. They were with him during the spontaneous conflicts with the Pharisees as well as the more serendipitous moments that happened along the way.²

Jesus was also organized in his approach. For example, Jesus regularly took the 12 to the synagogue where he would teach, heal, and stir up trouble. There was a certain rhythm to their lives, one that other people could identify and participate in.

¹ Ray Vanderlaan has some really good material on what the rabbi-disciple relationship looked like in Jesus' day <http://www.followtherabbi.com/>

² Mark 2:18-23; 5:21-34

The 5 T's of Disciple Making

So what did they focus on as they spent time together? Basically, Jesus took them through a developmental track that focused on what I call the 5 T's – team, topics, tasks, tools, and tactics.

Team: Jesus invited the 12 to be “with him.” They developed a shared rhythm of life that included spatial proximity, relational frequency, and situational variety. They shared meals, took trips, and celebrated the holidays together.

Topics: Jesus intentionally pulled away on a regular basis to process what they had been experiencing. He would ask and answer questions, as well as give real time instruction on how to live and lead in the kingdom.³ Some of the topics he kept coming back to, over and over again, were the kingdom of God, faith, servanthood, money, forgiveness and prayer, among others.

Tasks: Jesus had specific tasks he trained them to do. Proclaiming the kingdom, casting out demons, healing and prayer, to name a few. It's important to note, however, that Jesus never asked them to do anything he was not willing to do himself. Jesus led first by example.

Tools: When you ask someone to do something new, you should give them the tools they need to do it. Parables and short memorable phrases are just some of the tools Jesus used to train them.

Tactics: Jesus not only trained the 12 on *what* to do, he also trained them, when appropriate, on *how* to do it. For example, when he sent them out by themselves on their first mission, he gave them specific instructions on what to say and how to respond if people rejected them.

Any approach to discipleship that does not include one of these 5 T's will be missing a key component of how Jesus made disciples. For example, small groups typically focus on team and topics, (sometimes just topics!) but often leave out focused training around tasks, tools and tactics. This is one of the reasons why small groups have typically not been an effective way of walking people through a process of transformation that, in turn, leads to more disciple making. We always pay a price when we do discipleship “our” way.

TEAM
TOPICS
TASKS
TOOLS
TACTICS

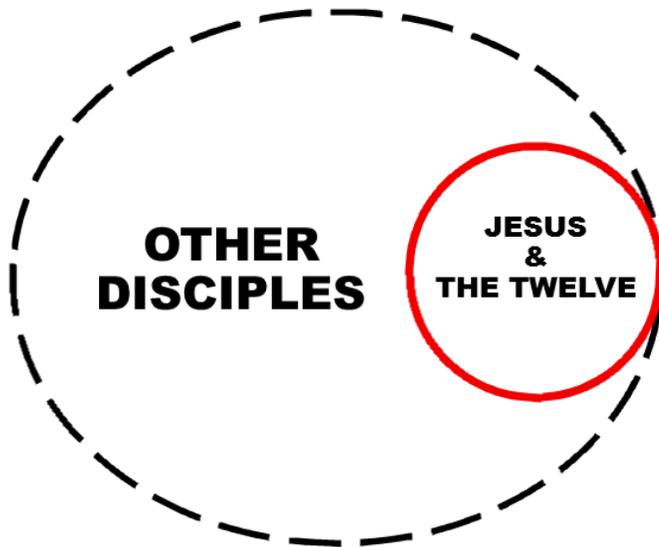
³ Mark 4:10-12, 33-34; 6:7-13, 30-32; 7:17-23; 8:27-33; 9:1-13; 28-29; 33-37; 10:32-34

Beginning with the End in Mind

At the end of the discipling process, Jesus turns to his disciples and says “Now it’s your turn. Go and make disciples.” If we were one of his disciples, we would most likely be thinking “Oh! You mean the thing you have been doing with us for the past 3 ½ years? You want us to find some other people and walk them through a relational process of transformation?” This is how discipling relationships work— we tend to disciple people in the same way that we have been discipled. Jesus knew this, which is why he was strategic about the way he discipled them. He was setting an example for them to follow.

Discipleship...in Community

The 12 were not the only people that followed Jesus. There was a larger group of “other disciples” that gathered around him. Visually, it would look something like the diagram below. This larger group is really important to the way Jesus made disciples.



You see, Jesus wasn’t just training the 12 to eventually lead another group of 12. No, Jesus knew that in order for the movement to be healthy and sustainable, people would need to organize themselves into different sized groups, both small and large. In fact, if you leave people alone long enough, they end up self-organizing into different sized groups anyway. It’s just what people do. By including this larger group of “other disciples”, the 12 not only got to see how Jesus led groups of different sizes, they also got to enjoy all the social and spiritual benefits of belonging to an extended family on mission.⁴

⁴ We know there were up to 70 people who participated regularly in the group of “other disciples” because later, when Jesus sent the disciples out on the limited commission, he was able to assemble a group of 70 people who had enough exposure to the message and the methods of Jesus that they could do it on their own.

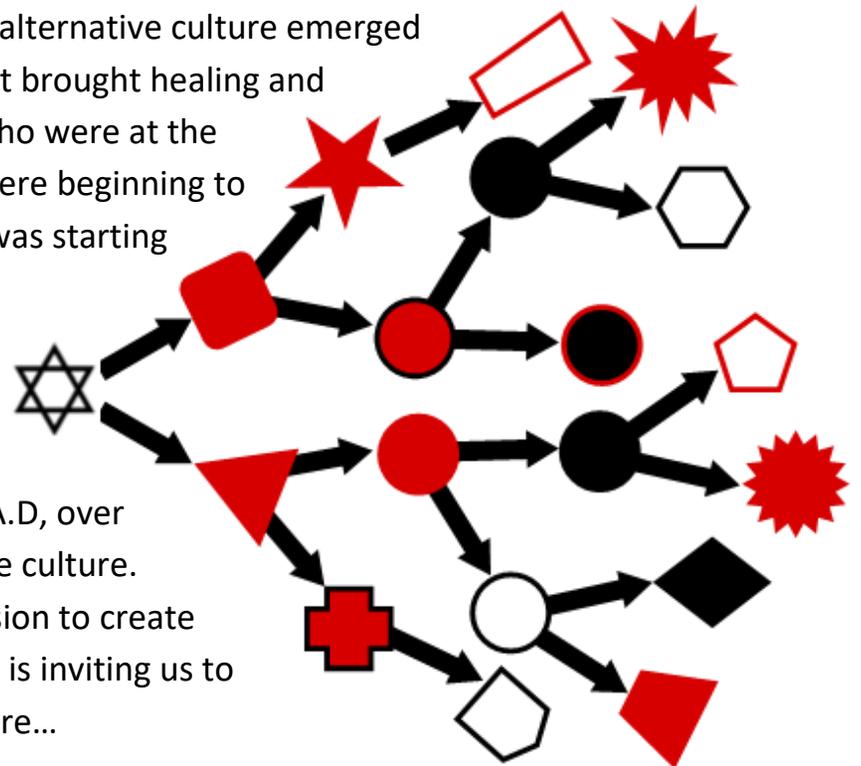
Discipleship, in Community, on Mission

So where does mission fit in with discipleship and community? The answer is, at the very front! Jesus was always leading his community of disciples into the broken world around them, inviting people to enter and receive the rule of God in their life. Sometimes they threw a really good party and invited people to build new friendships. Sometimes they gathered people and taught them new things about the kingdom of God. Sometimes they served people. Sometimes people got healed. Sometimes they just came together and did what families do – eat food and have fun together. One thing is certain, they did not exist solely for themselves. They were an extended family on mission to the world around them.

A Redemptive and Generative Culture

After doing 3 ½ years of discipleship, in community, on mission, a new alternative culture emerged that was both redemptive and generative. It was redemptive because it brought healing and renewal to people and places that were normally overlooked. Those who were at the edge were being invited to belong at the center. Those at the center were beginning to move towards the edge. There was a great reversal taking place. God was starting to make things right.

It was generative because it was able to reproduce itself across cultural and geographical boundaries. What started out as a small, mainly Jewish movement of 120 people, ended up becoming a multi-cultural network of flourishing missional communities. In fact, by 300 A.D, over half of the Roman Empire had been saturated with this new, subversive culture. Jesus used a movemental strategy of discipleship, community and mission to create lasting change in the world. He started a permanent revolution that he is inviting us to participate in. There is so much more to the story of Jesus. There is more...



LIVING THE STORY...

Now it's time for us to talk about how we are going to participate in His movement. We want to put the message and methods of Jesus into practice, on the ground, in real life, starting right here in Nashville. This means finding creative ways to do discipleship, mission, and community the way Jesus did it.

T-Groups

When looking at how Jesus made disciples, we talked about the 5 T's of team, topics, tasks, tools, and tactics. In order to imitate his example, we will use a vehicle for discipleship called **T-Groups** that will help us put these 5 T's into practice. Here are some frequently asked questions that will help explain what T-Groups are, and how they work.

How many people can be in a T-Group? We have seen groups of 4-6 people work really well.

What do T-Groups Do?

T-Groups focus training and accountability around the 5 T's of team, topics, tasks, tools and tactics. This can happen in both organic and organized ways.

Organic: T-Groups hang out together at various times to share life with one another. Since life can get really busy, each group has to be creative in how they do this. Typically, T-Group organically hang out together around food, fun or family time.

Organized: T-Groups meet weekly (sometimes bi-weekly) for about an hour and a half to discover what God has been saying to us and how we can respond to it. To help us do this, we use a tool called The Learning Circle that centers around Jesus' message "The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is near, repent and believe the good news."

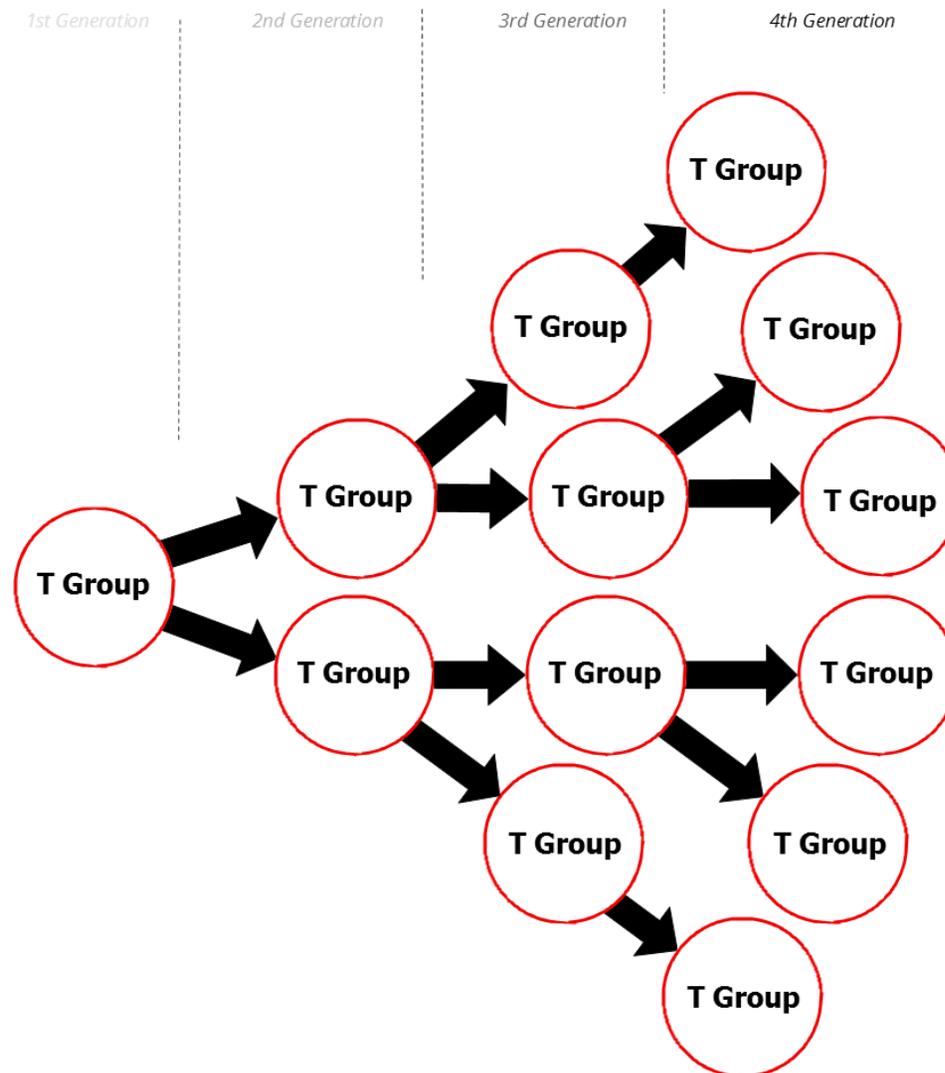
Do T-Groups have leaders? Yes. Like Jesus and the 12, a T-Group has one leader with several followers, *for a season*. If we disciple well, at the end of the process, followers will become leaders.

Is there a book to use in the T-Group Meetings? Yes. We have a Discipling Tool Kit that guides the discipling process.



T-Groups and Movement

The goal of a T-Group is to be both redemptive and generative. That means each person should experience both transformation and multiplication. Transformation takes place when we begin to develop the comprehension, competencies and character of Jesus. Multiplication takes place when, at the right time, each person starts their own T-Group. It would look something like this:



Follow me as I follow Christ

One really important thing to remember about making disciples is that we are not ultimately asking people to follow us. No one person has everything we need to become the person God created us to be. We offer our life and leadership as a model of what it can look like to follow Jesus in this particular place and time, but we are all looking to Jesus as our perfect example. So just like Paul, we should say “Follow me AS I follow Christ.”⁵ Everyone who is making disciples should practice being weak and vulnerable with those they lead. This means confessing sin and being humble enough to admit when we have made a mistake or are not good at something.

Tim’s Experience in Being and Making Disciples.

Tim has spent the last 9 years of his life using T-Groups to coach and disciple a wide range of people. From those living out the gospel in their day to day jobs, to church planters and local church staff, as well as entrepreneurial leaders in the non-profit and business sectors. Through these relationships he has seen lives transformed and disciples multiplied. It’s amazing what God will do when we intentionally invite people into our lives and walk with them through a relational process that supports and stretches them to live out their true identity in Christ.

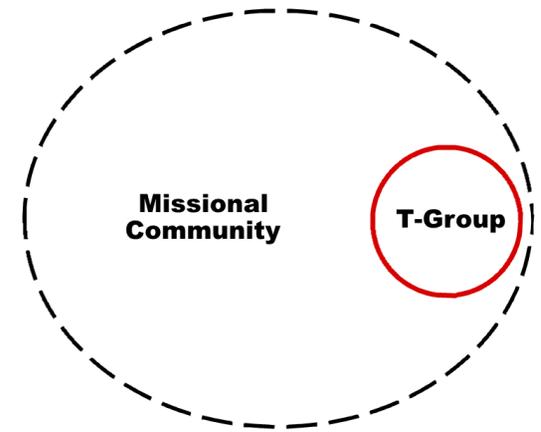
So yes, this is not just theory. Tim has on the ground experience of making disciples in a variety of contexts. At the end of this E-book you will find a few people sharing their experience of walking through a developmental relationship with Tim and how that has impacted their life and leadership.

“I found my discipling experience with Tim to be transformational, educational and empowering. Feeling confident of being properly equipped for the task, I have started discipling other people.”
Harry Robinson, Clarksville TN

⁵ | Corinthians 11:1

Missional Communities

Just like Jesus, we want to do discipleship, in community, on mission. In order to do this, we will use a vehicle called Missional Communities - an extended family of 15-40 people who are on mission to a specific missional context – a neighborhood or network of relationships. As an extended family, we will share food, fun, friendship and faith as we organize our rhythm of life around developing an **UP**-ward relationship with God, **IN**-ward relationships with their Missional Community, and **OUT**-ward relationships with people in our missional context who are not yet in Christ.

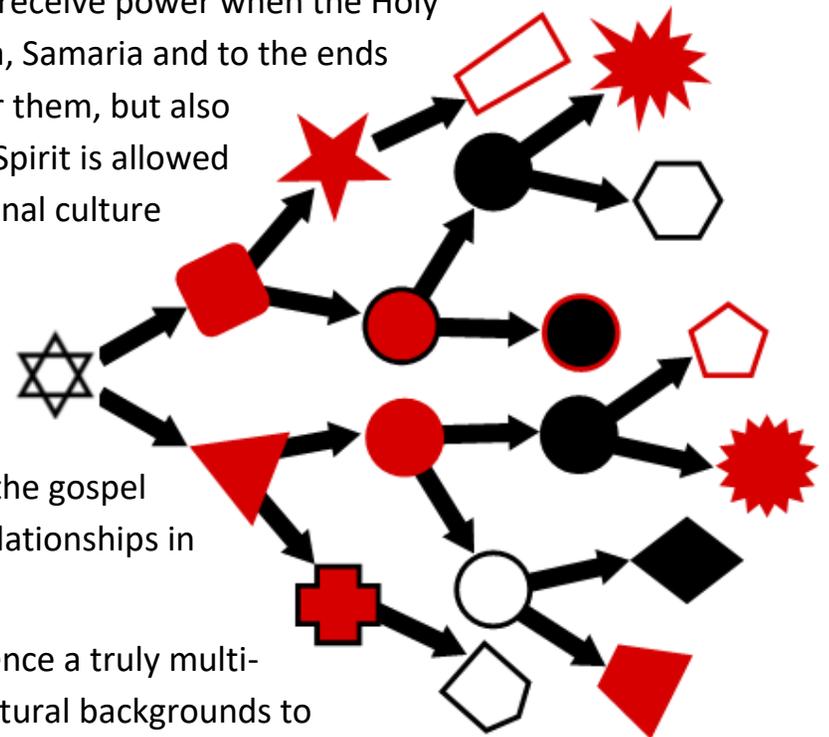


ONE LIFE: A Diverse Network of Missional Communities

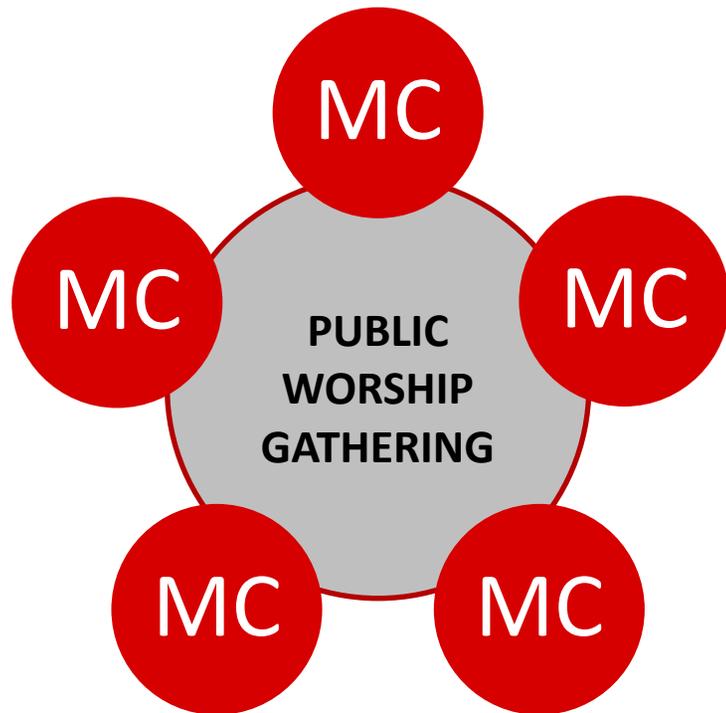
Before Jesus ascended back to the Father, he told his disciples “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth.” Notice how the Holy Spirit was going to not only empower them, but also lead them to cross geographic and cultural boundaries? When the Holy Spirit is allowed to direct the mission, the movement will eventually break out of its original culture and become multi-cultural.

We expect to see this same thing happen. At some point, as people are discipled and become leaders, the Spirit will awaken them to their callings, creating the opportunity for new missional communities to be formed, each with their own unique missional context. We want to see the gospel of the kingdom move into every neighborhood, and every network of relationships in the city, and beyond.

It is through this de-centralized approach to mission that we can experience a truly multi-cultural expression of the church. Instead of asking people of diverse cultural backgrounds to



come to us, we will go to them, participating in the already existing rhythms of their culture. This means each missional community will have the freedom to organize their rhythm of life around the unique cultural context in which they are being sent.



New Church Plants

Each MC is potentially a new church plant waiting to happen. As the Spirit leads, the local church will provide support and accountability for MC's to "spin off" and form their own local expressions of the Church, moving towards their own cultural identity and leadership.

Public Worship Gatherings

While we see T-Groups and MC's as being absolutely foundational to the sustainability of the movement, at some point during the life cycle of the first plant, we will start a public worship gathering where we will cast vision, celebrate what God is doing, meaningfully connect with others in the movement, and communicate the gospel in compelling ways. The design of these initial gatherings will be light weight and low maintenance so as not to overburden existing T-Group and MC leaders. In order to

accommodate the different learning stages of children, there will also be age appropriate learning environments incorporated into these public worship gatherings.

Youth Ministry

While parents should be the primary disciplers of their children, we believe it takes a village to raise a child. We commit to discipling parents, as well as children, in age appropriate settings that facilitate the development of **UP**-ward, **IN**-ward and **OUT**-ward relationships. Overall, we value an inter-generational approach to developing young people into the way of Christ.

EVERYONE GETS TO PLAY

APEST

We believe each one of us has been gifted by Christ to be an apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd or teacher (APEST).⁶ This means every person has a unique set of skills and sensibilities that can help the movement grow and mature into the fullness of Christ. For example, apostles help us to be missional; prophets help us to be incarnational; evangelists help us to be attractional; shepherds help us to be communal, and teachers help us to be instructional. When each one of these giftings has the opportunity to equip the rest of the body, we grow and mature into the fullness of Christ.

Practically speaking, we envision T-Groups and Missional Communities as the primary environment where APEST will find its most fruitful expressions. As the movement grows, we will start a training track for each respective APEST ministry to ensure each gifting is able to both give and receive equipping within the movement.

Naturally Supernatural

The Spirit is given to each one of us as a gift, uniting us to Christ in redemptive and generative ways. We open ourselves up to the leading of the Spirit, producing the fruits and gifts of his presence in our lives. We believe the gifts of the Spirit should be expressed in naturally supernatural ways. In other words, it doesn't have to be weird or spooky in order to be from the Spirit. The Spirit points us to Jesus, not himself, which means the Spirit will always express himself in Christ-like ways.

JOURNEY WITH US

My wife and I, having recently moved to Nashville, are looking for people who want to walk with us on this journey of discipleship, community, and mission. If you would like to have some conversations about what it would look like to lock arms with us as go on this journey together, you can contact us here: onelifenashville@gmail.com

⁶ Ephesians 4:7-16

Every movement has a name, and after much prayer and reflection, we have decided to use the name OneLife. It captures several core passions that run deep in our hearts.

one life

Jesus Christ is the
one life that conquers
sin and death.

Jesus Christ is the
one life worth living
and dying for.

A disciple of
Jesus has one life,
not separate lives for
work, family and
church

God will change
the world one life
at a time

Just one life
is worth it all



Tim was raised in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. His journey with God started out in a Christian reform school in the heart of southern Georgia. It was there that he encountered some authentic Christian people who really cared, leading him to experience the redemptive power of Christ's love.

Tim later went on to college and received a degree in Biblical Studies. As someone who always had a pioneering spirit, he began to focus his entrepreneurial skills and sensibilities toward starting new kingdom ventures. Over the last 20 years, by God's grace, he helped plant two churches in both urban and suburban contexts, started a campus ministry, an inner city mentor program for at-risk youth, as well as several businesses.

Most recently, Tim co-authored a book with Alan Hirsch entitled *The Permanent Revolution* where they outline the movemental significance of the five-fold ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers. For the past 3 years Tim has been coaching and consulting planters, church leaders and training organizations on how to become more movemental in their approach to ministry and leadership. After this extended season of investing in other leaders, Tim and his wife Tiffany have been called by God to re-enter the field to plant churches again.

Tiffany grew up in Montgomery, AL where she was actively involved in mentoring teenagers and adults in under-resourced urban neighborhoods. After receiving her degree in social work, she began focusing her experience and training around ministering to women as well as empowering women in their callings for ministry.

Tiffany is passionate about efforts related to social justice and sustainability. In recent years, she has volunteered with Hope Pregnancy Center as a Mom2Mom mentor, while running her own start-up business called *GreenHouse: Natural Products, Healthy People*.

Tim and Tiffany value leading together as a team and, after 14 years of marriage, have learned how to draw from each others unique giftings to meet the diverse challenges of pioneering leadership.

A FEW PEOPLE SHARING ABOUT THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH TIM

Tim is an exceptional teacher with an innate ability to help others understand biblical truth through visual means. He has played a huge role in helping me to transition from a purely evangelistic culture to a discipling culture. He is an awesome and loyal friend who loves the Lord.

Scott Hedges – Founder at Paraclete Aviation Life Support, Clarksville TN

I have never met anyone quite as passionate about making disciples as Tim. He is an apostolic leader who uses his innovative strategies to help other people live out their calling. As someone who has been personally invested in by Tim, I trust his character and competence to lead other people in the way of Jesus. Jason Horn – Founder of Ironmen: Mobilizing Men for Missional Movement, Clarksville TN.

Tim is passionate about every step of the discipling process. He genuinely loves people, and has a unique ability to assess where they are in their spiritual journey. In my own discipling relationship with him, I was exposed to tools that have not only helped me to grow and mature, but also equipped and empowered me to disciple others in their own unique spiritual journeys. Jenna Jimenez – Director of Mom2Mom Mentoring at the Hope Pregnancy Center, Clarksville TN

I appreciate Tim's ability to lead an intentional discipleship session with purpose and direction so that all group members can participate and be challenged spiritually. But Tim does so much more than dispense information. He invites you into a genuine life on life relationship. Grant Rathe – Disciple Maker and Stay at Home Dad

When Tim started coaching me, I was struggling. It was the end of Year 1 of a new missional-incarnational community I helped start in an urban, multi-cultural setting. It is now Year 3, and after roughly 2 years of Tim's coaching, I know the direction I am called to go in, and have the tools to lead in that direction. I am a firm believer in Tim and his approach, and would recommend him to anyone. - Josh Shepherd – Leader of Mission House Network, Kansas City, KS

Tim was my mentor during my time with the V3 Church Planting Movement. Let me say honestly, this is one very brilliant and helpful guy! His insight and ability to teach various missional methods for spreading the gospel is astounding. He really has much to offer anyone who is serious about planting the gospel in today's ever-changing cultural climate. John Boggs – Founder of Portico Church, Bloomington IN

Like most people, I would have said I knew and understood discipleship. It wasn't until my coaching relationship with Tim that I was exposed to tools and practices that helped me, not only be a better church planter, but a better discipler of people and leaders as well. Now, after two years of discipling both new and existing Christians, God is allowing us to see the beginnings of a movement that is multiplying disciples, leaders and churches in both our city and region. Mike Pumphrey – Founder of Awaken Church and Church Planting Strategist with The Bridge Network, Virginia Beach VA.