

# ABL ZE

**A PROPHETIC CALL TO IGNITE THE CHURCH**

*Cindy Jacobs, Heidi Baker, Niko Njotorahardjo,  
Rob Hoskins, Andy Byrd, and more*

## **STUDY GUIDE**

**JERUSALEM 2020**

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# THREE ESSENTIAL SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIPS

*Kenneth Ulmer*

## **BIG IDEA**

The value of committed relationships with other believers cannot be overestimated. Each of us needs three key bonds in our walk with God—a spiritual father, a spiritual son or daughter, and a spiritual friend.

Spiritual fathers provide mentorship, wisdom, and encouragement. Likewise, having spiritual sons and daughters allows us to bestow these same blessings onto those younger than us. Spiritual friendships provide support, accountability, and strength for everyday living.

Do you have each of these spiritual figures in your life?

**READ:** Chapter 1 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“Who fathers you? Who parents you in the ministry? Who is your overseer? Who do you allow into your life closely enough that they see and relate to you as a son or as a daughter? Who are your fathers?”

## **RESPOND**

Do you have any spiritual father figures (or mother figures) in your life right now? If so, who are they?

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What are some practical ways in which you can seek out older, wiser mentors?

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In your own words, what is the difference between becoming a “cookie cutter” of someone else and being mentored by that person?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

Spiritual fathers are in multi-generational relationships. Paul is looking down the road toward his spiritual grandsons. He’s looking at what the dynamics of ministry are really all about.

## **RESPOND**

Is the church doing a good job of fostering relationships among different generations in your opinion? Why or why not?

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What are a few of the main struggles in forming mentorship relationships between those of different generations?

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What benefits of multi-generational relationships have you witnessed, both in your own life and in general?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“Who’s your son? Who’s your daughter? Into whom are you pouring your life? What will the next generation will receive from you? What’s coming down from generation to generation, from father to son?”

## RESPOND

Do you have a spiritual son or daughter in your life at the moment? If so, who are they?

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Why do you think it’s so important for both spiritual parent and spiritual child to foster this kind of relationship?

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What specific things do we see Paul doing for Timothy? Do we see Timothy providing Paul with anything of value?

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It’s clear from the accounts of the early church that spiritual fathers and sons don’t always agree. What’s one potential benefit of being in relationship with someone who has different viewpoints than you do?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“If you have just received a blessing—some good news, something amazing that’s happened to you—and you’ve seen the hand of God do it—who would be the first person you call?”

## RESPOND

Who are your top 2-5 spiritual friends? Why do you think these individuals have such a strong impact in your life?

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Do you have an accountability partner, or have you had one in the past? What benefits does this kind of relationship provide for the believer?

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What’s your initial response when friends call you out on sin or other detrimental behavior? Do your spiritual friends have authority to speak honestly into your life?

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Today, write out a prayer asking God to strengthen your relationships in these three areas. Ask Him to help you seek out and find wise mentors; to be a mentor to those who are younger and less experienced than you; and for spiritual friends to help keep you on the path toward the purposes He has for you.

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# SENT TO WIN THE NATIONS

*César Castellanos*

## **BIG IDEA**

God wants to use each one of us in a supernatural way to help reach the nations for Christ. No matter what your background, education, experience, or gifting, you have a role to play in inviting those who haven't yet heard of Jesus to be saved! We must surrender to this calling and say, "Here I am, Lord—send me!"

**READ:** Chapter 2 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

"When we come to know Jesus as our Lord, not only do we receive his calling, but he also gives us the purpose for which we are in this world."

## **RESPOND**

Why do you think it's essential to be constantly discovering the unique purpose for which God has created you?

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What does it say about you that God had a unique, one-of-a-kind calling on your life even before you existed?

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Why is personally knowing Jesus Christ essential to discovering and fulfilling your purpose?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“I kept silent. I didn’t know much about prayer; but I realized that if I asked for something, I should wait for an answer.”

## **RESPOND**

Why do you think it’s a struggle for many believers to sit in silence and listen for God’s voice?

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Do you find this challenging? Why or why not? What strategies or perspectives have you found helpful when you don’t immediately hear Him speak?

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Read God’s words to the nation of Israel in Jeremiah 29:11-14. Why do you think God doesn’t usually solve our problems immediately, or answer us audibly?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“One day, the Lord led me to a small church, where I heard they were worshipping God. When I looked inside, it seemed so ridiculous to me that I thought, ‘This is not for me.’ I was going to walk away, but I felt something that stopped me. I heard a voice saying, ‘You’re not going anywhere. You’re going in there.’”

## RESPOND

One of the enemy’s strongest strategies is convincing us that we don’t need other believers. Why do you think he wants to get us isolated from the Body of Christ?

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How does your church community make you a better follower of Christ? How do they help maximize your potential?

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Is there anyone “outside the doors” of your church who needs an extended hand of invitation? Who are they?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“God wants to use you in such a supernatural way. There’s no time to waste. We need to take advantage of every moment to influence people’s lives. Every single one of us must say to Him, ‘Lord, here am I, send me.’”

## RESPOND

What is God calling you to right now? Where is His Spirit leading you? What passions and burdens are on your heart for the world?

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Are there any areas in your life in which you've become complacent about fulfilling God's purpose? Are there places in which you haven't been making the most of your opportunities? If so, what are they?

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Why do you think God waits for our request to be sent before sending us?

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# THE YEAR OF THE VOICE

*Cindy Jacobs*

## **BIG IDEA**

If we're going to go into our Promised Land—the purposes, promises, and plans that God has for each one of us—it's going to take some battle and struggle. There are nations that desperately need Jesus Christ, and there is also a real spiritual war waging over their souls.

God doesn't simply want us to fight about politics and earthly circumstances; He wants to elevate our perspective so that we see the bigger war going on. Rather than prophesying about problems, God's desire is that His people rise up and show the world Jesus—the ultimate solution to every problem. When we bring life and hope, that's when reset and revival take place.

**READ:** Chapter 3 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“If you're going into your Promised Land—your purpose, your destiny, that which you're supposed to do in life, that God has for you—and you're not having any push-back, then you're not going the right direction.”

## **RESPOND**

How is this perspective different than our culture's ideas of how we discover destiny and purpose?

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In your opinion, why does God allow hardship and trial on the road to our Promised Land? What purpose did this serve in Israel's case?

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What push-back and opposition are you encountering right now in your journey? Have you seen personal growth and maturity as a result?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“We need to understand that there are nations that need Jesus Christ—there’s going to be a battle over that. There are people who need to be saved—there’s going to be a battle for the souls of those people. So it’s time to establish war rooms once again; it’s time to learn how to go to war.”

## **RESPOND**

What is your local church currently doing to go to war for the unreached souls in your community?

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What are some of the main reasons, or purposes, for which people go to war today?

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According to Scripture, for what reasons does God go to war?

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What might spiritual warfare over souls look like in our everyday lives? How might it manifest?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“Regardless of how you feel politically, there needs to be civility; the Holy Spirit can help us discuss the issues with respect for one another—even disagree without getting angry or using derogatory speech. I think that we can be Christlike in how we’re sharing.”

## **RESPOND**

Why do you think people take political matters so personally? Why is this such an incendiary topic?

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What does the Bible tell us about interacting with those with whom we don’t agree? How did Jesus handle interactions with those who did wrong things?

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In your own words, what’s the difference between agreeing with someone and respecting them and their opinions?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“God doesn’t simply want us to prophesy the problems from the earth; but He gives us the ability to see heavenly solutions from His perspective.”

## RESPOND

It’s easier to identify problems than it is to offer solutions. What are some problems going on in your community right now?

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Have you identified any possible solutions to these struggles?

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What would it take to make these solutions become realities?

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Why do we need heavenly perspective in order to truly solve the problems all around us?

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# WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE HARVEST

*Heidi Baker*

## **BIG IDEA**

There's a harvest coming in 2020, and in order to be ready, the people of God have to come together in unity! We need one another in order to reach all the people with whom God desires to share His salvation. As we support each other, it's imperative to do so with character and love. We have no authority where we have no love.

**READ:** Chapter 4 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“So I believe 2020 is the year of harvest—the greatest harvest we’ve ever seen. I believe God is uniting churches and church leaders to support one another. I believe that churches are going to hold up the net together for the fishes coming in. So as the church is going out, and people are coming in, churches are going to start supporting each other and being united—the leadership for the people.”

## **RESPOND**

How have you already seen churches of different denominations, locations, and backgrounds coming together in unity?

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What steps do you see that still need to be made in pursuing unity amongst the global church?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“Sometimes, we see power without character. We see love without power. Love without power is wimpy. We don’t want that kind of love—that’s like being toothless. We want love and power to come together with character.”

## RESPOND

In your own words, what is character? How is it necessary in order for us to wield power responsibly?

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How did Jesus demonstrate both love and power simultaneously during His ministry?

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What incidents can you think of in which a person with power had little love or character? What happened as a result?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“You have no authority where you have no love. And where you have love, you have authority.”

## RESPOND

Is it easier to pursue love or authority? Why?

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As God grows us in His love, what are some of the things this transformation may cost us? What might we need to let go of?

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Can you think of a believer in your life who wields love and authority well? What do you admire about this person?

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# CALLED TO BE HARVESTERS

*Jean-Luc Trachsel*

## **BIG IDEA**

Each of us as believers is called to be part of the sharing of the gospel and the harvest of souls. The Lord is challenging us to set aside our differences and our earthly ways of thinking in order to join together and demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit in the earth. This isn't about one preacher, one church, or one nation—it's about a movement across the globe of Jesus-loving disciples. You have been chosen to bring His good news to the nations, along with your fellow brothers and sisters. What an amazing calling!

**READ:** Chapter 5 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“The Holy Spirit is not just for a certain group of people. The Holy Spirit is for everyone, because the work of the Holy Spirit is to reveal Jesus.”

## **RESPOND**

Why do you think it's so easy for believers to assume that a different people group or culture won't be receptive to the Holy Spirit?

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What cultural disconnects or challenges do you think the disciples faced as they ventured out of Jerusalem and Judea towards the ends of the earth?

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What comfort zones might God be calling you to go beyond as you consider how to reach the unreached?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“Today, I believe the Lord is challenging us to come out of the box—to preach the ABC’s of the gospel, to gather not just to fill up our own churches, but to bring the kingdom of heaven to this generation with a demonstration of power. And this demonstration of power can happen only through the Holy Spirit.”

## **RESPOND**

What needs to shift in the church’s focus if this is going to happen? What short-sightedness do you perceive in our communities of believers today?

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According to the Bible, what does the “demonstration of power” of the Holy Spirit look like manifested? (Check out Acts 1:8; 8:19; Romans 15:13 for some examples.)

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“It’s not about stars. It’s not about one preacher traveling around the world. It’s about a movement of disciples who love Jesus, who are serving Jesus, and who are offering God’s Word to the mission fields of today.”

## **RESPOND**

Why do you think that we, as people, tend to fixate on leaders, preachers, and public figures—even in church circles?

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How does this fixation on a certain pastor or church take away from what God wants to do throughout His global church?

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**REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“The Lord has chosen you. You can bring the gospel with a true demonstration of power to the place where you are, to touch your family, your friends, and your neighbors.”

**RESPOND**

Who do you know who needs the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives (believer or nonbeliever)?

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Where in your life do YOU need a fresh demonstration of the Holy Spirit’s power?

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Write a short prayer asking God to empower you to show others the power of the Holy Spirit—to reach others with the gospel, and keep focused on the big picture mission that God has for His global church.

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# THE THIRD PENTECOST

*Niko Njotorahardjo*

## **BIG IDEA**

The First and Second Pentecost events, in Acts and in Azusa, respectively, have paved the way for the next wave of God’s work in our day and time. This is a global movement that will require unity and cooperation amongst God’s Church. The Great Commission we are called to is something none of us can do alone—we must join together in order to see the Third Pentecost come to be.

**READ:** Chapter 6 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“Praying ‘Your kingdom come,’ means we are praying for the return of the Lord Jesus, because we long for his coming again. Like the early church always said earnest prayers because of their longing for the Lord’s coming, we must keep doing so today.”

## **RESPOND**

Do you find yourself longing for the return of Jesus on a daily basis? Why do you think you answered the way you did?

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How can we live in such a way that we are prepared for His coming at any moment? What practical things can we do in our everyday routines to make sure that our minds and hearts are prepared?

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How does a longing for Jesus's return affect our attitude when it comes to reaching the lost?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“Our goal as believers is to become a likeness of the image of Jesus. That is, to become a disciple. The Great Commission cannot be completed in our own strength; we have been given the power of the Holy Spirit in order to become witnesses for Christ.”

## **RESPOND**

Have you been trying to live out the calling of a disciple out of your own strength? If so, what things have you tried doing on your own?

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Can you recall instances in Scripture where God's people were victorious only because of the power of the Holy Spirit?

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The Bible makes it clear that Jesus is the one who forms us into His own likeness (see John 15:1-8). Take time to pray today and ask the Lord to make you more like Him.

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**REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“The body of Christ must be in unity. Unity is the main key to the great harvest of souls.”

**RESPOND**

Where do you see disunity in the body of Christ?

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What do you think are some of the initial steps the church needs to take in rectifying this disunity?

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Why do you think unity is so essential to seeing a great harvest of souls?

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# INNOVATION AND DISRUPTION

*Rob Hoskins*

## **BIG IDEA**

As society morphs and changes, God has been gracious to us and has worked through man's innovations. Changing times require us to change our tactics in reaching others with the gospel. As the church, we must see ourselves as part of the ongoing change happening in the world. This doesn't mean that we conform, but rather that we lead the charge for change by engaging with the gospel, and with the unreached, in fresh, creative ways. New technologies and developments are things we can use as tools, not something we have to fear.

**READ:** Chapter 7 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“The world is speeding up. It's sped up through the dynamics of globalization, connectivity, and urbanization powered by the digital revolution. All of this has accelerated change at a mind-numbing pace; and it's actually changing everything.”

## **RESPOND**

God's plan has often included people and decisions that shake things up. Can you think of some examples of this?

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Think about the last five years. What changes in technology, culture, communities, lifestyle, and other shifts have you seen in this short period?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“Changing times demand changing forms. You see, the church has an enormous task, both familiar and unfamiliar, that confronts us. We must see ourselves as a part of this change in the world.”

## RESPOND

What recent changes have you seen the church make in order to better serve both believers and nonbelievers?

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Are there any areas in which you believe the church still needs to update their ways of doing things based on changing times? What are they?

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What are some practical ways you can become more comfortable with the unfamiliar, while still upholding your Biblical convictions?

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Can you think of any places in Scripture where God’s people embraced an unfamiliar method or way of doing things?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“Engaging with the Scripture in new, fresh ways in our world results in new great awakenings—all of which use, rather than despise, innovation and technology.”

## RESPOND

Have you ever found yourself approaching the Scripture more out of routine or obligation rather than excitement and desire to know God better? What do you think contributed to this?

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Just like in our human relationships, variety keeps things exciting and keeps us engaged. In what fresh ways might you engage with God’s Word? How can you change up the way you spend time with God?

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How might God be leading you to integrate new ideas, new technologies, and other innovations in both your personal walk and in your ministry and evangelism efforts?

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# BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIER

*Russell Evans*

## **BIG IDEA**

Our words hold tremendous power to shape our reality. We can demonstrate our faith in God through what we say; when we speak words of faith, it overcomes the sound of fear. What are you declaring over your life? Are you using words of criticism and cynicism, or praise and thanksgiving?

**READ:** Chapter 8 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“We often talk about our words forming our worlds, and that’s true. The Bible says that there is life and death in the power of the tongue. God spoke the world into existence. Everything comes through sound. But sound needs to produce something. Faith without works is dead.”

## **RESPOND**

Why do you think the tongue holds such immense power?

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How have you seen the tongue used to bring life and encouragement?

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How have you seen the tongue used to bring discouragement and destruction?

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What are one or two verses that talk about the importance of which words we choose to speak?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“The sound of faith overcomes the sound of fear. A sound of faith is an antidote to the fear that tries to drag on me. When our praise sounds are going out—our prayer sounds, our worship sounds, our faith declaration sounds—it creates momentum.”

## RESPOND

How does raising a sound of praise in your one-on-one time with the Lord affect your walk with Him?

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How does raising a sound of praise with other believers affect your connections with the Body of Christ?

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Evans writes that “praise and thanksgiving start the engine of faith.” Why do you think it’s more difficult to *begin* speaking words of praise than to do so once you’re already in a rhythm of doing so?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“The most depth—the most joy— you can have as a Christian is to see people saved. So let’s be action people with our money. Let’s be action people with our volunteer time. Let’s be action people with who we’re looking to share the love of Jesus with. Let’s be action people.”

## RESPOND

How do we see Jesus being a man of action in the Scriptures?

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In your own words, explain the difference between faith and action.

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Is God calling you to any specific actions right now? They could be personal disciplines, relational investments, or other things you feel led to pursue. What are they?

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# BE HOLY, BE ONE, BE LIGHT

*Samuel Rodriguez*

## **BIG IDEA**

When we embrace the work of Christ and surrender to Him; when we are committed to unity in the Body of Christ; and when we are shining His truth to those who haven't yet made Jesus their Lord, we are living in a way that brings freedom, victory, and deliverance to those we reach. The Holy Spirit is hard at work in our world, and this work will be sustained by Him; it's essential for us to be holy, be one, and be light as we partner in the work with Him.

**READ:** Chapter 9 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

"I sense an admonition, a clarion call, from heaven for the church to be holy. And by "holy," I don't mean in a legalistic sense. I mean embracing the grace-filled work of Jesus—a position from which we pursue righteousness, live above reproach, and live in accordance and adherence to God's Word. This is the holiness we're called to as believers."

## **RESPOND**

How do you think the church attempts to go about attaining holiness in ways *other* than what Jesus Christ intends?

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What do you think the draw of achieving holiness in our own power is? Why is this such a struggle for so many—even believers?

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The difference between striving for holiness in our own strength and allowing the Holy Spirit to change us is our motivation. When our motive is based on making ourselves look better, we'll try to do it in our own strength. When our motive is glorifying God, we'll lean into His power. What's your motivation for desiring to be more holy?

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### **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“I am so frustrated with the notion of a fragmented, hyphenate church. There is no such animal as a black church, a white church, a yellow church, a brown church. There's only one church: the church of Jesus Christ.”

### **RESPOND**

We live in the most technologically advanced and “connected” world in history. Why do you think the church still struggles to be unified?

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What's the difference, in your own words, between unity and diversity?

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What work do you think the church needs to do in order to embrace unity while still maintaining the uniqueness and diversity of each local church community?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“This light—the light of Christ in us—always wins—every single time it stands next to darkness. I believe we stand at the precipice of a fresh move of God’s Holy Spirit. It’s a Holy Spirit move that will usher in a fresh, 21st century holiness movement. Again, this will be a grace-substantiated holiness movement.”

## **RESPOND**

No matter what the divisions in the church or the tragedies in the world, how does it make you feel to know that God will carry His church through and be victorious in the end?

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How does this perspective affect the way that you go about your everyday life and interactions with others?

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# A HOLISTIC REVIVAL

*Stovall Weems*

## **BIG IDEA**

The church as presented in the Bible is a multi-faceted community. It's not just about what happens inside the church building, but what happens in homes and families. If we don't take the home back, what's the use of ministering to people in the church building? Kingdom authority has little to do with what happens on Sunday and much more to do with a holistic restoration of home and family during the other six days of the week.

**READ:** Chapter 10 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“If we really look into what the Bible says in Acts and the epistles about the *ecclesia*, the called out ones, we see that the church is three-fold. The church is the people of God. It is the priesthood of all believers. It is the family of God.”

## **RESPOND**

What is the difference between being a “people” and being a “family”? What benefits does each kind of community hold?

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According to the Bible, what does it mean to be a royal priesthood (check out 1 Peter 2:5 and 2:9)?

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Of these three facets, which one have you spent the least amount of time reflecting on? What fresh perspective does this facet have to offer you in your walk with the Lord?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“If we don’t take the home back—if we don’t take the family back—what does it matter if we can get people to church? If God touches them and heals them, but their homes are in chaos because they’re not equipped or empowered to lead their families and be a light in their neighborhoods, they’ll still be at a severe disadvantage.”

## **RESPOND**

Why do you think many churches are more focused on buildings and services than families and homes?

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Is your local church more focused on services and church programs, or on families and homes? What persuaded you to answer the way that you did?

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Why do you think some church bodies or even denominations haven’t ventured as far into the home as they can? What intimidates us about addressing and working to reclaim the home?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“Kingdom authority has nothing to do with your church size. Look at the apostle Paul—his churches were small by today’s standard. Does that mean Paul had less authority than someone with a bigger church? No, just the opposite. I would say that kingdom authority is the lessening of ourselves.”

## RESPOND

What does Jesus have to say about the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (check out Matthew 20:25-27)?

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How do we typically measure greatness, authority, and reputation in today’s church?

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Do you see any differences between your two answers above? If so, what do you think are some causes of this discrepancy?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“I encourage all of us who are passionate for a move of God, and the glory of God, to seek a holistic form of revival that that brings restoration into the home and the family. It doesn’t have to be sustained by the man of God in the pulpit; it is sustained, and grows like wildfire, in the people.”

## RESPOND

This move will be sustained by the people themselves, not by one preacher or leader in the church. How do you think this will affect the responsibilities and callings of believers? Of pastors and leaders?

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How will this method of revival result in more effective and rapid widespread growth?

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What are some practical action steps that you and your church can take to shift your focus even more towards the home and family?

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# THE WORLD THROUGH FOUR LENSES

*Todd Johnson*

## **BIG IDEA**

While many of us consider Christianity a Western religion, the recent explosion of salvations and mission activity in the East and South tell a different story. Christianity isn't a Western religion, but a global faith. We need people of all kinds not just at the table, but in the kitchen—which means that each of us are called to interact and link arms with people of all backgrounds.

**READ:** Chapter 11 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“Only 18% of all Christians were in the global South around the year 1900. Today, in 2020, 67% of all Christians are in the global South. That's two-thirds. That's a huge shift!”

## **RESPOND**

What do you think are some of the causes of this explosion of converts in the global South?

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Why do you think many believers think of Christianity as a primarily Western religion?

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How can the church go about changing this narrative, and opening eyes to the fact that there's great activity happening in the worldwide church?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“Global Christianity is not a Western religion that invites Africans to the table. We are a global religion, and we need Africans in the kitchen—particularly if they're almost half of all Protestants.”

## **RESPOND**

What are some of the challenges of being “in the kitchen” with Christian leaders who are from different backgrounds and cultures?

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What are some of the potential strengths, or benefits, we can acquire from working beside believers of other backgrounds and cultures?

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Have you ever learned something new about your faith, or even life in general, from a believer of another culture? How did that lesson help you see God, and yourself, in a new way?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“Our research has shown that 87% of all Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists do not personally know a Christian. This is our biggest challenge. As we go forth, we’re part of an incarnational faith, of which friendship and hospitality are central values. We believe that Holy Spirit empowerment is going to lead you to engage with people of other faiths.”

## RESPOND

Why do you think many believers are intimidated by the idea of approaching someone of another religion with the gospel?

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Do you know anyone of another faith with whom you could share your testimony? If not, how could you go about seeking out friendships with those of other faiths?

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What does Biblical hospitality toward those of other faiths look like? How can you practically begin to create inviting places in which others can experience the love of God—maybe for the first time?

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# HOW TO FAIL (OR SUCCEED)

*Dr. George Wood*

## **BIG IDEA**

The feeding of the 5,000 is one of the only stories included in all four gospels, because it is a clear picture of the way God builds His kingdom. There are a number of lessons we learn from this story, including two things that cause failure: focusing on the enormity of the task, and focusing on the little that we have right now. When we trust God’s provision and direction, and focus on Him instead of what we have, we’ll be empowered to complete the work for which He’s placed us here.

**READ:** Chapter 12 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“[The feeding of the 5,000] is a teaching miracle. It is more than a description of an event that happened; it is a description of how God does his work, how Jesus builds his kingdom, and therefore, it is a miracle about spiritually feeding the world—not just physically feeding a crowd.”

## **RESPOND**

Read Matthew 14:13-21. What principles of God’s kingdom work do you see in this story? How does Jesus operate in performing this miracle?

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Jesus fed the people fishes and loaves, and they were all satisfied. What spiritual food are people hungry for today? What do they need from God in order to be satisfied (look at John 6:32-38).

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“What causes failure? Looking at the enormity of the task. This is true in your own personal life, as well. When the Lord calls you to do something, if it’s bigger than your ability, it’s probably a good clue that the Spirit is in it, and wants you to do it.”

## RESPOND

What is God calling you to do, in this chapter of your life, that’s bigger than your ability?

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Why is it often difficult, in our flesh, for us to admit that we need God’s help?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“If our task of reaching this world for the Lord Jesus is going to be done by 2033, it is going to take the Spirit’s work over and beyond what we can do. It is going to take signs and wonders. It is going to take anointing and a tremendous infusion of the Spirit’s power into the life of the church.”

## RESPOND

What are some practical ways to ensure that you don’t leave the Lord out of your efforts this week?

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How have you already seen the Spirit working through your life, in small ways and big ways?

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**REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“If we simply look at what we have now, we’ll never get started. We’ll be discouraged by how big the task is, and how few the resources are. But if we trust that the Lord is able to take whatever we put into his hands, then we focus on him, and this task will get done.”

**RESPOND**

What do you have as far as resources right now? What are your “fishes and loaves” that God wants to use?

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Write a short prayer surrendering what you have over to God, thanking Him for it, and asking Him to multiply it for His purposes.

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# THE EVERYDAY BELIEVER

*Andy Byrd*

## **BIG IDEA**

Jesus went about ministry in a unique way. He wasn't afraid to get up close to people whose lives were messy. He saw them not with exasperation or judgment, but with utter compassion. We are all called to follow His example—not just a select few preachers and speakers. The only way we'll bring God's message of life into the farthest reaches of our world is if, every day, common believers act with compassion and love toward the least of these.

**READ:** Chapter 13 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“When Jesus is healing the sick, it means that he's among the sick—and he's not in nice hospitals. They're not getting good nursing care. They don't have a good doctor staff that's overlooking them. No, they're lining the streets of their towns and cities. They're begging for their livelihood.”

## **RESPOND**

What kind of heart towards the sick must Jesus have had in order to be willing to get down on their messy, smelly, dirty level?

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What can local churches improve upon today in the area of caring for the sick?

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**REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“Jesus looks at all of that with different lenses. He has different glasses. I think one of the things God is doing in this hour of history is giving the church different lenses with which to look at the brokenness of society, so that we say along with him, ‘The harvest is ripe.’”

**RESPOND**

Why do you think it’s difficult for most of us to recognize harvest opportunities in the broken places of the world?

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The more we’re exposed to people in need, the more the Holy Spirit can mold our hearts to be more like His own heart. How can you practically get involved in helping someone less fortunate than you (or how are you already involved in ministry that has changed your heart)?

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In your own words, what does it mean to have true, Biblical compassion for another person?

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What effect has the compassion of others had in your life? How has it changed you personally?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“This is not the hour for a few names, microphones, stages, and songs or sermons. This is the day of the everyday common believer rising up in the authority and the power of God to be the solution to the crisis of their hour.”

## RESPOND

Why do you think church culture—especially in the West—tends to elevate and glorify certain individuals—speakers, preachers, and evangelists—more than emphasizing the role of the individual believer?

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What can local church leadership do to empower their members in service and ministry? What messages, opportunities, or accountability can be offered that isn't offered enough?

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# A PARADIGM SHIFT

*Billy Wilson*

## **BIG IDEA**

The work God wants to do in our world will require believers to live in unity with one another. We must open up to working with believers of other cultures, generations, and backgrounds than we have. Most of all, the new work that God wants to do will require each of us to humble ourselves, become broken before God, and acknowledge our need for His help in everything we do.

**READ:** Chapter 14 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“This new move of God will, first of all, be about unity among believers. Today, I pray that, as you read this teaching, your heart will be fused together with people all around the world who believe that we are in the midst of a shift—a new shift of Holy Spirit power on a new generation.”

## **RESPOND**

What does true, Biblical unity among believers look like?

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How do you think the church sometimes “fakes” unity, or espouses a counterfeit version of unity?

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Where can you take practical steps to foster and promote unity with the believers in your life?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“So God has always been moving; and yet there are times in human history when there is an intensification of the moving of God. I personally believe we’re in one of those times of intensification now.”

## **RESPOND**

Can you think of other times throughout history where God’s voice and movements have been more intense?

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What actions, words, and influences do you see that accompany these moves of God? How does He speak and interact with His people during times of intensification?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“We must open up to what God is doing in a new generation if we’re going to have a voice with them. In many ways, the church has lost its voice with the new generation because we’re stuck in the past.”

## **RESPOND**

Why do you think different generations have such a difficult time respecting and connecting with one another?

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Think about a believer you know who is in a different generation than you. What lessons and wisdom do they have to offer you?

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How can you take practical steps to foster deeper relationships with believers of other generations?

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**REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“The 21st century will be characterized by people who are deeply broken before God. The only people who were able to receive Jesus’s ministry were those who had repented and were broken—who understood they needed help.”

**RESPOND**

In your own words, what does it mean to be Biblically “broken” before God?

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What do you think is the biggest roadblock that keeps people—both believers and unbelievers—from admitting they need God’s help?

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Why do you think Jesus passed over those who didn't acknowledge that they needed His healing and help? What does this tell us about the way that God operates and moves?

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# PRAYING FOR A DOUBLE PORTION

*Paul Dhinakaran*

## **BIG IDEA**

To carry the gospel and the work of God to others requires deep, God-given compassion. Only when we truly love others can we effectively reach them with the Word of God. This requires us to surrender to Christ completely. When we ask for His direction, and for His anointing, we'll find that He leads us into new realms of ministry to others.

**READ:** Chapter 15 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“This time, the Lord Jesus Christ is not going to come as a little baby. He’s not going to come into the temple to be slain as a lamb. He’s going to come back as the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He’s coming to judge the world.”

## **RESPOND**

What was the purpose of Jesus Christ during His first coming? How does this influence the kind of approach He took to life and ministry?

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What is the purpose of Jesus Christ’s second coming? How does this influence how He will return?

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How do you think the preparation should differ between those who waited for His first coming and those of us who are awaiting His second coming?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“When that compassion flows through us for the people, the solution comes through the word of God, for their souls to be saved, for their bodies to be healed, for their lives to be established, for the curses to go, for the demons to leave them.”

## **RESPOND**

Why do you think compassion is a prerequisite to holistic healing? What does this tell us about God’s heart not only towards those who need healing, but towards those of us who partner with Him in bringing that restoration?

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Where do you struggle with compassion? What’s one group of people, or individual, that you need God’s help to have compassion toward?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“God wants us to cry as Elisha cried, ‘My master, Elijah, let me have the double portion of the spirit that is upon you. Let me have it today.’”

## **RESPOND**

What preparation do you think Elisha had to undergo in order to be ready to receive the double portion he asked for?

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How can you practically be preparing to receive more anointing and responsibility from the Lord?

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# A FRIEND OF ISRAEL

*Tentezen Franklin*

## **BIG IDEA**

A church that blesses and loves Israel will be blessed by God. The entire story of salvation—the entire Bible—is from the Jews. It's essential that we teach those coming up under us in the faith about the importance of partnering with and supporting Israel. The day we stop doing that as a nation is the day God's hand of favor will come off of us. The Bible says that we, the Gentiles, are the grafted-on shoots, and the Jewish nation is the original tree. We should always keep this perspective as we talk about, consider, and partner with the nation of Israel

**READ:** Chapter 16 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“The New Testament is from the Jews—the story of Christ, born in a manger; the virgin birth; the death on the cross; the propitiation of our sins put on him; the resurrection from the dead—it all goes back to the Jews.”

## **RESPOND**

Why do you think God ensured that His Word was entirely penned by people of the Jewish nation?

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What does this fact tell us about the significance of the Jews in God's eyes?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“A church that decides to bless Israel will release supernatural blessing upon that church. A nation with leaders who will bless Israel will release supernatural blessing upon that nation. A family that decides to bless the nation of Israel in a tangible way will release supernatural blessings upon that family.”

## RESPOND

Read Genesis 12:1-3. What protection and security does this promise give to all the people of the Jewish nation? Why do you think it was imperative that God communicated this from the very beginning?

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Why do you think some Gentile believers actually look down upon the Jews?

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How does it practically look for a Gentile nation, family, or individual to “bless” Israel?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“We are the engrafted shoots. We were not a part of the vine, but God tied us up and gave us life through the branches of the tree. The tree called Calvary gave us life, and grafted us in.”

## RESPOND

How do Gentile and Jewish believers make one another better? What purposes may God have had in mind when He planned to graft Gentiles into the tree?

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What unique strengths and competencies do Gentiles bring to the church?

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What unique strengths and competencies do Jewish people bring to the church?

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How does acknowledging those different from ourselves—and partnering with them in the work of the gospel—grow us in maturity and love?

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Whether you're Jewish or Gentile, how can you begin to pursue relationships and partnerships with those of the opposite background?



# THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL EVANGELISM

*Michael Koulianos*

## **BIG IDEA**

What’s the key to successful evangelism? Radical devotion—a surrender that costs us everything. When we give all of ourselves—heart, mind, soul, and strength—to God, He empowers us to love and to reach others. We have to remember that it’s the Great Commandment that fuels the Great Commission. If we haven’t been transformed to love others, we won’t be able to effectively share the truth of God’s Word with them. We need to return to a simpler ministry model that focuses on Jesus—everything else flows from intimately knowing Him.

**READ:** Chapter 17 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“When you combine heart, soul, mind, and strength, we are talking about the entirety of who we are—the entirety of our being. So here the Lord says, ‘Loving me with all you are is the first and greatest command.’ What do I believe the Lord is saying in 2020? I believe he’s saying what he’s always been saying: ‘Love me with all you are.’”

## **RESPOND**

Which of the above areas of yourself do you struggle with handing over to the Lord most? Why does this area present a challenge for you personally?

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How does this command to love God first, before any ministry action or activity, go against the common cultural priorities of our day?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“It is the Great Commandment that fuels the Great Commission. We don’t preach the gospel, heal the sick, cast out demons, raise the dead, cleanse the leper, disciple the nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit because *we have to*. No. We do that because we’re in love.”

## RESPOND

What happens if we get this order wrong? What happens when we put the Great Commission before the Great Commandment?

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How is the love of Jesus evident in His earthly ministry? Can you think of specific examples?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“Simplicity, I believe, is returning to the church in a way we’ve never seen. The deeper we go with the Lord, the simpler he makes it. Jesus is the gospel. Jesus is the point of the Scriptures. Jesus is the author of the Scriptures. Jesus is the centerpiece of heaven. The life of Jesus is the Good News.”

## RESPOND

How do you think we sometimes overcomplicate our walk with God?

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Why do you think we add requirements and restrictions to what's meant to be an intimate relationship with God that fuels our entire lives?

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Think of one or two practical steps you can take to foster your personal relationship with Jesus this week. What are they?

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# MEN LIKE TREES WALKING

*Nathan Morris*

## **BIG IDEA**

God has great plans for this generation, and they're centered around the presence of the Holy Spirit! Revival is here, and God wants to open our eyes to something greater. What we need in order to see His vision is for His DNA to become a part of us. Once our calling is directed by His will, His kingdom, and His purposes, what we do will truly count for eternity.

**READ:** Chapter 18 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“I didn't use to have a desire for ministry. If you'd have told me as a young man that I would be a preacher, I would have laughed right in your face. But God began to open my heart and I began to see as I bowed to worship the Lord, multitudes of people.”

## **RESPOND**

How has God changed your heart since you first met Him? What causes or people groups has He led you to serve?

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Why is it imperative that we surrender to God in order to discover the callings and the work that He has for us? How can we miss it by *not* surrendering?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“There’s something greater God wants this generation to step into. It isn’t just about more lights and more smoke machines and better buildings. It’s about the presence of the Holy Ghost lighting a fire in this generation. It’s raining! God wants to open your eyes to something greater. There’s something deeper.

## RESPOND

What do you think we often focus on *instead of* the priorities that the Holy Spirit has for us? What distracts us from His best?

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Why is it so easy to sometimes settle for the things we get distracted by in church and ministry circles, instead of embracing the greater things?

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What are a couple of practical ways that the local church can shift its focus away from the shallow and toward the purposes of the Holy Spirit?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“Does your vision have his DNA? Does your calling have DNA of the kingdom? Will it count for eternity, or is it all about you and your promotion? You see, God is about to move this generation out of all the self-promotion, and into a realm where the Spirit of God says, ‘Now this counts for eternity. This is about souls; this is about changing our culture; this is about raising up a standard against the devil.’”

## RESPOND

In your own words, what does it mean for your vision to be infused with God’s DNA?

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How can you do your part to make sure you're listening for, and grasping, the DNA of God's vision for your life?

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What differentiates a vision that's all about oneself from an eternally-meaningful vision?

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# WHAT DO I SEE IN 2020?

*Goodwill Shana*

## **BIG IDEA**

There is a refreshing and a revival coming to the church in 2020. The Holy Spirit wants to empower each and every believer, so that the community as a whole grows into the fullness of God. The truth of God will prevail against pseudo-religion and false prophecies, and there will be a new standard of biblical leadership as we draw closer to Christ.

**READ:** Chapter 19 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“I see a depth of the work of the Spirit of God in reviving old movements and old places, and the glory of God coming back into the church with a new freshness and outpouring.”

## **RESPOND**

Why do you think God revives old movements and places? What value does this bring to the new movements and places that have recently come to be?

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Think about a time in your own life in which you saw God bring a fresh outpouring of Himself. How did this change your life specifically?

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**REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“I see a revival and a fresh manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit in the pews—in the people—in the congregation—like we’ve never seen. This is not just a few powerful men standing under the anointing of Almighty God, but the power of God moving into the highways of the byways of our communities.”

**RESPOND**

What does it look like for our focus to shift from the leaders of the church to empowering each and every believer?

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Which of the gifts of the Spirit have you seen manifest in your own life, and in the lives of the believers around you?

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Why do you think it’s important to God to move into each family, home, and local community?

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**REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“I see—particularly in Africa—the true, Jesus-centered church rising above the confusion of the pseudo-spiritual and the false prophetic, and reasserting itself in a way based on biblical ministry, teaching, and empowerment. I see the church raising a new standard of biblical church leadership, ministry, and accountability.”

**RESPOND**

How do you think false doctrines and prophecies find their way into the church? What practices (or lack of practices) lead to this?

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What false messages can you think of that are circulating in the church right now?

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What are a couple of practical ways that you, and your church, can combat these false messages and raise a new standard of biblical leadership and ministry?

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# A COMMISSION FOR EVERYONE

*Chadwick Mohan*

## **BIG IDEA**

The Great Commission is founded off of an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. Once we know Him, the Spirit can develop in us a genuine desire to serve others. This is lived out not just within the walls of the church building, but in our homes. It's a Commission that can be seen in every aspect of our lives, and in our relationships with others.

**READ:** Chapter 20 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“Jesus was not about a religion. Jesus was about a relationship with the Father in heaven. Everyone has been given an opportunity to choose the Father.”

## **RESPOND**

In your own words, what is the fundamental difference between a religion and a relationship?

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In your walk with Christ right now, are you operating more out of a religious attitude or one of relationship? Why did you answer the way you did?

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What is the only thing that must take place on our part in order for us to enjoy a relationship with God (look at John 6:29)?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“Now that I’m anointed with the Spirit, I am called to serve. That’s the first thing that you and I have to do in this Great Commission.”

## **RESPOND**

What does true, Biblical service look like, as compared to the world’s idea of service?

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What kind of attitude, or disposition, towards others is required in order to serve them?

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Service is more than what you say. It’s what you do. Think of someone in your life who needs help or support. What can you practically do to serve them this week?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

“Don’t underestimate the power of homes. Your home is a powerful mission center. If you open your home and invite people who still do not know Jesus, God can use that fellowship in a powerful way. Don’t underestimate the power of your home. In fact, the early church thrived and multiplied from homes to homes.”

**RESPOND**

Why do you think believers often emphasize activities happening inside the church building instead of those happening in homes spread throughout the community?

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What latent possibility and power might we discover if we focus on making every home a mission center?

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How can we practically foster relationship and ministry in our homes?

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# EVERY TONGUE, TRIBE, AND NATION

*Ed Stetzer*

## **BIG IDEA**

The church is on the move, because God's people are responding to His call. However, there are still thousands of people groups unreached with the message of the gospel. God's truth is meant for every single person on earth, which means we have work to do!

**READ:** Chapter 21 in *Ablaze*

## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

"The church moves because Jesus says, 'As the Father has sent me, so send I you.' God's people responding to God's call is what puts the church on the move."

## **RESPOND**

What does it practically look like to be "sent" by God? What kind of action does this entail (look at Matthew 28:16-20)?

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How can we look at the life of Jesus, who was also sent by God, and see a template for what our ministry ought to look like? What are some of the specific characteristics, actions, and attitudes you observe in His life?

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## **REFLECT AND DISCUSS**

"Using the Joshua Project number from 2019, there are still 7,103 out of 17,073 total people groups who are classified as 'unreached.'"

## RESPOND

How does it make you feel to know that there are this many unreached people groups in the world today?

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What are some practical ways that you can work to reach these groups, or partner with those who are working to reach them?

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## REFLECT AND DISCUSS

“Let’s be thankful there are followers of Jesus from different traditions. Let’s recognize that a whole lot of people don’t know Jesus at all; we want them to be part of the great throne worship: men and women from every tongue, tribe, and nation. Let’s remember that there are 41% of the world’s people groups unreached. Let’s remember that call, and engage that.”

## RESPOND

Why do you think many groups of believers are more focused on debating with other believers instead of reaching those who have never heard the gospel?

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How do you think we can shift this focus toward those who need the Good News?

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What practical steps can different groups of believers take to grow in unity and partnership with one another?

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