

Capstone Project Report

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Working Title of Project: Emotional Health. The Neglected Aspect in the Discipleship Program in the Church.

Faculty you have consulted for this project: Dr. Boyet Lisbe, Dr. Ricky Recodo, Dr. Susan Cuambot.

List of the courses you've taken at CGST that you will integrate into this capstone: Counseling 1 & 2, Foundations of Theology, Hermeneutics, Doctrine of Man, Doctrine of God.

Capstone Description:

This capstone will be about looking into the current landscape on how churches do their discipleship program. However, this capstone will only assess its discipleship landscape in and highlight on where the church needs to consider to strengthen their discipleship program base on the original design of God for man along with the current reality. The original design of God for man will be discussed further as a basis for doing the discipleship program in the church. But doing discipleship is so simple enough that it primarily covers the maturity of every individual in the area of their love for God and their love for others. Our Lord pointed this in the gospel of Mark, he said, "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:30-31). However, discipleship though its simple but it is difficult. The difficulty comes from the fact that the church deals with the lives of people who are still sinful and shaped by the worldly culture and values that they are expose to. The purpose of this project is to propose to integrate the Emotionally Healthy Spirituality course into the current discipleship program in the church. However, in most cases or only probably few, the emotional part is the most neglected aspect now a days. "There is very little said from the pulpit about the soul as an essential part of our lives and almost no serious teaching about it at any level of our various Christian educational undertakings" (Dallas Willard, p.208). This capstone, therefore will talk about several things to achieve its goal. Below are the things that this paper will mostly cover,

- Discuss on the general framework of discipleship in the church

- Suggest on ways to assess the current program of discipleship along with the potential consequence if the emotional health is neglected through the program
- Highlight on one possible reason on why churches, conscious or unconscious neglect the emotional aspect in doing discipleship
- Revisit the original design of man from the creation account
- Highlight the value of integrating the spiritual and the emotional aspect by looking into biblical examples and passages.
- Introduce two courses on Emotionally Healthy Spirituality (EHS).

Approach and/or Methods:

The first approach is to present the current reality that all organizations are facing brought about by the pandemic including the church. This paper did not conduct any surveys but pulled one summary from a study conducted by the University of the Philippines Diliman Psychological Services. This current reality was also confirmed in the church with the series of counselling since the pandemic started in 2020.

The second approach is to talk about how the churches approach discipleship in a general sense. The very reason why this capstone will only discuss the general framework in the discipleship simply because, as to the detail of doing discipleship, each church has a way of contextualizing discipleship. Nevertheless, with only the general framework that this capstone will cover, it will point out the similarities of doing discipleship among churches.

The third approach is to help the churches assess their current program and point out one possible reason of why does churches approach discipleship in a manner that they neglect the soul or the emotional part of man.

The fourth approach is to revisit the Biblical teachings and examples on the value of integrating the spiritual and the emotional aspect in doing discipleship.

Then the last approach is to invite churches can to integrate the courses within their discipleship program. On this last approach, this capstone will highly encourage the churches to go through

the questions and do assessment as a team. The questions and assessment can be found in the Appendices Annex 2. The purpose of the team assessment to be led by their senior pastor is to know if the discipleship culture is already created, started, and maintained. This assessment must be led by the lead pastor or the senior pastor along with the church staff or the elder board.

- I. Introduction** - This capstone will be about inviting the churches to integrate the two courses on Emotionally Healthy Spirituality into the current discipleship program in the church. The two courses are the Emotionally Healthy Spirituality (EHS) and the Emotionally Healthy Relationships (EHR). The EHS introduces every participant into a transformative spirituality with God. On the other hand, the EHR equips every participant with practical skills in order to launch them into a transformative spirituality with others.
- II. Background** - When the pandemic affected everyone since 2020, many have lost their jobs, businesses, loved ones due to Covid-19. Some people lost their dreams, desires and others. This pandemic has brought losses from different directions and sizes. In addition, this pandemic has totally changed the landscape as to how everyone attends classes, conducts meetings and trainings. Everything has shifted to online due to a series of lockdowns and quarantines. Therefore, every organization both from the non-government and the government sector, businesses and religious community were not prepared to face the new challenges at hand. Both the non-religious and religious sector recognized that everyone must not isolate from the community. These sectors recognized the need of the season, that everyone must have at least a level of emotional health or well-being if they are to thrive amidst the challenges and emotional issues caused primarily by the pandemic. In an article entitled *“Mental Health in a time of Pandemic: The invisible suffering”* written by Cristina Eloisa Baclig gave us an alarming number of individuals on how the pandemic has affected them mentally and emotionally.

- As SARS-COV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19 spread across the world, people reported feeling afraid, worried, and stressed. All of which WHO explained were normal responses to perceived or real threats, especially at times of uncertainty. Alarming sign: 1,375 are suicide related calls received by NCHM hotlines (12.48% of all calls) in 2021 (Source: Council for Welfare of Children). The University of the Philippines Diliman Psychological Services explained that the mix of emotions felt and experienced by many during the pandemic are normal. According to UPD PsychServ, factors like quarantine, physical distancing, bad or negative news, lack of certainty, health risks and the lack of supplies and basic needs amid the pandemic can make people go through so many emotions. The pandemic does not only trigger normal responses to threats, it has also triggered mental health conditions and exacerbated existing ones among many people (source: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1544354/mental-health-in-a-time-of-pandemic-the-invisible-suffering/amp>)

In the same way, when the pandemic came, it has affected also the churches both locally and globally. In most counseling cases, almost all of the church members, including leaders are having difficulty in navigating their situation and process their emotions well. The worse is that, they have stopped participating in the church. This pandemic also exposes where the church needed to seriously consider to strengthen their discipleship program that will also address the emotional health or well-being into the life of every disciple in the church.

III. Body

- a. The General Framework of Discipleship** - The Lord appointed the church to make disciples. The goal in the process of discipleship is to teach every follower to mature in the faith and equip them for the work of service. This is what the gospel of Matthew pointed out before the ascension of Jesus. “Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:18). Also,

the apostle Paul said on the appointment of God, giving gifts to leaders in the church.

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...”

(Ephesians 4:11-12). Furthermore, the book of Hebrews also taught about the goal of discipleship, “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil” (Hebrews 5:12-14). What these three passages teach about the process of discipleship is, it involves teaching, equipping, building so that every follower grows mature in the faith, able to discern and distinguish good from evil and is equipped to do the work of service. But to accomplish this goal of discipleship, God gave gifts to leaders in the church to teach, to create the discipleship culture that transforms every disciple, and also to create a system and structure for the discipleship ministry.

The general framework of discipleship covers at least two aspects, namely, first is the spiritual aspect. Second, is the emotional aspect. The second aspect is what this capstone is going to propose to include along with the spiritual aspect. The spiritual aspect of discipleship covers,

- Introducing Christ through the preaching of the gospel
- Teaching the foundations of the faith and the doctrine of the church. The goal here is to inform every disciple with the Essential Doctrines and see on how they can participate in the work of discipleship.
- Equipping on Evangelism and leading small groups.
- Mentoring on how to raise small group leaders.

However, the emotional aspect of discipleship complements the spiritual aspect. The emotional aspect covers the soul maturing in a disciple’s life base on the two greatest

commandment of Christ. Later part, this capstone will propose at least two courses which will cover the emotional aspect of discipleship.

- b. Assessment on the Current Discipleship Program** - But, if the churches are to assess with how they do discipleship, almost all focuses on the spiritual aspect. While the spiritual aspects are crucial, important, foundational and must be part of the work of discipleship, however, the emotional health is the area that needs to be consider if a follower is to grow spiritually and emotionally mature. For example, an individual cannot grow in "...love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control..." (Galatians 5:21) if they are not equipped to process their negative emotions like disappointment, sadness, fear, anger, and depression. If these negative emotions remain unprocessed in the life of a disciple, these negative emotions stay beneath the surface of their soul and will only wait for a triggering point to happen so that they explode. Scazzero said that, "Human beings are like icebergs: 10 percent is above the surface and visible; 90 percent is below the surface and invisible" (EHR Workbook, Scazzero, p.81). Therefore, a huge part of doing discipleship does not only involve about introducing Christ through the gospel, establishing one's faith foundation and equipping them to do the work of service but must also include emotionally maturity so that they are able to listen to what the Spirit is saying through those emotions. On the other hand, when the emotional aspect is neglected through the discipleship process, there will be possible consequences in the life of a disciple.
- c. Disconnected Spirituality** - People who are not equipped to process their negative emotions will only leak as triggering circumstance comes. A disciple who are not equipped normally whine, complain, distance themselves, blame, and use sarcasm most especially when they don't get things the way they wanted. Most Christians have received teachings and training through the basic discipleship process but, in reality, sometimes, they operate like there is a disconnect between the spiritual and emotional aspects. This is not something new. In fact, this issue has been prevalent during the time

of the apostles. In James 4, the apostle pointed out. “What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.” (James 4:1-2). The early disciples during the time of James allowed their negative emotions like anger to cover what is pleasurable and honorable before God so that it hindered them from loving others through the conflict. This is how a life of a disciple look like when the emotional aspect of discipleship is not integrated along with the current discipleship program. But where did the church get possibly the idea that they can achieve spiritual maturity without emotional maturity?

- d. **Early Church Heresy** - Whether the church is conscious or not, this idea most likely come from Platonism that teaches that emotions is less than spiritual. Somehow this message has subtly crept into the practices and teachings in the church. So most of the churches have put emphasis on the spiritual aspect of discipleship and unconsciously neglect the emotional aspect. And the reality is, when the church put emphasis at the expense of the other, the outcome would be imbalance and disconnect. But does the Bible integrate both the spiritual and the emotional aspect appropriately in a life of a disciple?
- e. **Reexamine the Biblical Teachings and Examples on the Value of Integrating the Spiritual and the Emotional Aspect of Discipleship** - This section will reexamine with several passages on the value of integrating the spiritual and the emotional aspect in the discipleship program in the church. But first, below are the passages that teaches about God and who he is.
- “I the LORD your God am a *jealous* God.” (Exodus 20:5)
 - “The fierce *anger* of the LORD will not turn back until he fully accomplishes the purposes of his heart. (Jeremiah 30:24)

- “He began to be *sorrowful and troubled*. Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.” (Matthew 26:37-38)
- “He looked around at them in *anger* and, deeply *distressed* at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” (Mark 3:5)
- At that time Jesus, *full of joy* through the Holy Spirit...” (Luke 10:21)

God is a Person who thinks, who feels and wills. It is he who created everything and created everyone in His image. When God created man, he “breathe into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7). Here we can find that Adam is an integrated person with body and soul living, acting together. Therefore, with how God has designed everyone, he or she cannot escape from the fact that the soul aspect is largely part of who they are between his Maker and others. Therefore, the soul aspect in man or the emotion is not less spiritual but it is highly spiritual since it originates with God and mainly part of his original design in man. But after the fall of man in the garden of Eden, God’s original design in man’s soul and spirit has been tainted and corrupted by sin. In fact, after sin entered into the world through Adam, man started to experience shame, guilt of which it led them to cover their sin. In fact, the first murder was committed was due to the negative emotions like jealousy and anger of Cain to his brother, Abel. But to look more into the dynamics of a tainted soul after the fall, this paper will look into the case of Moses. Now as this paper will look into his journey, while it is good not to go so far in putting contemporary meanings into the ancient texts but it does make sense to say that Moses’ early childhood experiences were quite traumatic by any standard. It was quite traumatic due to the fact that he was born into an environment highly unsafe for children, abandoned by his mother though with good intention, then later on was reunited with his birth family but only to be returned to his adoptive family. In addition, Moses was raised in a pagan environment during his early years. It was an environment that prohibited him from living with his family and fellow Hebrews. Moses lived between two worlds and yet not fully at home with both. On the other hand, Moses could probably have developed a good coping mechanism for dealing

his pain and disappointment as everyone do. And it seems that Moses coping mechanism was to suppress his anger since he had nowhere to go with it. However, there were few instances that he also used that mechanism to control situations that seemed to be out of control. Then one day, his unprocessed emotions of which it had probably been building up for quite a while, got the best of him and it exploded. When Moses saw that one of the Egyptians abusing a Hebrew, his anger overwhelmed him, and killed the Egyptian. Then he tried to hide his sin by burying the body in the sand. But the next day, when he visited his people again, he tried to mediate a fight between the two Hebrews. The reaction was, “Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” (Exodus 2:14). And Moses was afraid. When these two Hebrews confronted Moses, he was also being confronted with the fact that there are things lurking in his soul that he has been suppressing over time. “That one glimpse of the destructive power of his raw and unrefined leadership was so frightening to Moses that he fled into solitude. He did not walk. He did not jog. He did not take time to figure out what it was or to put his affairs in order. He fled into solitude.” (Ruth Haley Barton, p.39-40). So, Moses settled in a place far from public, far from the places where most painful parts occurred in his life and far from his greatest mistakes. God’s greater work require sacred space, time and privacy at the well. The well has been a metaphor for the soul or the emotional health, the hidden riches and depths of the human person. But Moses sits down beside a real well, but the well can also be seen as a metaphor for his own depths of his soul and depths with God. In settling down at the well, he slowed down and begins to be honest with the substantive patterns that produced his negative emotions, outburst of anger. As Moses sat down beside the well was unaware of what God was going beneath his soul in silence and solitude. In Dan Allender and Tremper Longman’s book entitled *The Cry of the Soul* wrote on why it is so important to listen, feel and address negative emotions: “Ignoring our emotions is turning our back on reality; listening to our emotions ushers us into reality. And reality is where we meet God...Emotions are the language of the soul. They are the cry that gives the heart a voice.... However, we often turn a deaf ear-through emotional denial, distortion, or disengagement. We strain our anything disturbing in order to gain tenuous control of our inner world. We are frightened and ashamed of what leaks

into our consciousness. In neglecting our intense emotions, we are false to ourselves and lose a wonderful opportunity to know God. We forget that change comes through brutal honesty and vulnerability before God. (Allender and Longman III, p.24-25)". Moses from the story listened to and addressed his emotions beside the well. In fact, what we noticed in the next scene is a changed person. Moses, in the next passage, still has a strong sense of justice but he uses it to defend some of the shepherd girls who are being threatened by unruly shepherds. This time Moses was helpful by defending, helping and exercising restraint. This time he accomplishes justice without killing someone. Therefore, Moses could probably have addressed well his angry outburst beside the well by looking back and allowing God to do its greater work to transform and find himself. Moses sought God at the well in silence and solitude. "One of the primary functions of solitude is to settle ourselves into ourselves in God's presence...Solitude is the way to find ourselves again. And the longer we have been lost to ourselves, caught up with external stimulation, the longer it takes to find our way home again" (Ruth Haley Barton, p.41). Another biblical character who understands the importance of silence and solitude is David. David as a king, a ruler, and a man recognized that there are some situations where he needed to set time to being with God. And as he does that, a sacred space is needed where God could minister to him in solitude. In Psalm 131:2, he said, "I have calmed and quieted my soul". The Hebrew word translated the word "calmed" literally means "to make level". It is used in the Bible in the context of leveling an uneven field (Isaiah 28:25). David was saying is that he has intentionally leveled and settled his soul. One of the spiritual disciplines that the EHS course will equip the participants is silence and solitude, called the Daily Office. Please refer to the detail explanation of the Daily Office at Appendix Annex 1. So far this part of the capstone has talked about that the soul aspect of man, that this aspect is not less spiritual but it is highly spiritual since it originates with God and is largely part of his original design in man. However, due to sin, man's soul has been tainted and corrupted. Not only that the soul has been corrupted but what brought sin primarily to the whole humanity is spiritual death. But Christ came to give his life so that those who would put their trust in what he has done at the cross would be made alive. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1

Corinthians 15:22). After an individual comes to receive the saving knowledge and faith in Christ, he or she must be established and strengthen its foundation of the faith through the discipleship program. However, while the spiritual aspect of discipleship is foundational and important but there has to be a way or a place in the program where the church could integrate the emotional aspect. This soul part or the emotional aspect of an individual is where everyone usually experiences the tension and struggle in loving God and others. The primary reason on why everyone feels the tension is, “The soul aspect...correlates, integrates, and enlivens everything going on in the various dimension of the self. It is the life-center of the human being. It regulates whatever is occurring in each of those dimensions and how they interact with each other and respond to surrounding events in the overall governance of your life. The soul is deep in the sense of being basic or foundational and also in the sense that it lies almost totally beyond conscious awareness” (Renovation of the Heart, Dallas Willard, p.199). Therefore, if the soul is the life center then it would make sense to integrate them in the discipleship program in the church. In the following section, this capstone will share on ways on how to implement the Emotionally Healthy Spirituality course in the discipleship program and will present on the two courses of which the church can consider to include integrate them in the current discipleship program.

- f. Integrating the Emotionally Healthy Spirituality course into the Discipleship program** - First, it would be helpful to grab and read the book entitled Emotionally Healthy Discipleship by Pete Scazzero. You can purchase the book at www.amazon.com. Then after the reading the book, assess the current discipleship program of your church and see where you can integrate the EHS course. After reading, you can discuss it with your key leaders. On the other hand, while you plan to meet and discuss with your leaders, there are few elements of the EHS course that you as a leader need to bear in mind as you lead your team. Listed below are the elements, 1) EH discipleship has a large, and long-term vision for the church, 2) EH discipleship is a biblical paradigm shift that takes seven to ten years to integrate into the life of a church, and 3) EH discipleship unfolds from the inside and out-from you, to your team, to the wider church

(Emotionally Healthy Discipleship, Scazzero, p.215-219). As you and your team discuss about the EHS course, you may go through the questions and do the assessment as a team. The purpose of the questions and the assessment is to see if the current discipleship integrates the emotional aspect. The questions and the assessment can be found at the Appendix Annex 2.

g. Introducing Emotionally Healthy Spirituality (EHS) Course - Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Part 1 is about growing in love for God. We cannot be spiritually mature if we are emotionally immature. This provides the theological foundation for emotionally healthy discipleship. It includes reading the book Emotionally Healthy Spirituality and learning to cultivate a rhythm of meeting with Jesus twice a day using Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Day by Day: A 40-Day Journey with the Daily Office. These devotions correspond with the eight weekly themes of the course. The Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Course Workbook is used by participants during the course. The eight sessions include:

1. The Problem of Emotionally Unhealthy Spirituality (Saul)
2. Know Yourself That You May Know God (David)
3. Go Back in Order to Go Forward (Joseph)
4. Journey through the Wall (Abraham)
5. Enlarge Your Soul through Grief and Loss (Jesus)
6. Discover the Rhythms of the Daily Office and Sabbath (Daniel)
7. Grow into an Emotionally Mature Adult (The Good Samaritan)
8. Go the Next Step to Develop a “Rule of Life” (The Early Church)

Many churches, including ours, offer Emotionally Healthy Spirituality:

Part 1 two to three times a year so that it becomes the foundation for the discipleship of the entire community. High-quality training, coaching support, and additional resources are provided on our website at www.emotionallyhealthy.org/lead. (Scazzero, Peter. Emotionally Healthy Discipleship p. 221)

h. Introducing Emotionally Healthy Relationships (EHR) Course - Emotionally

Healthy Relationships: Part 2 teaches eight core skills to equip people to love others in a mature way. We call these eight tools “emotionally healthy skills.” While they may look simple, each is built on a theological foundation and contains multiple levels of depth to understand and apply. People are taught, for example, how to speak clearly, respectfully, and honestly; how to listen like Jesus; how to clarify expectations and assumptions; how to have a clean, instead of a dirty, fight with someone. Sessions include:

1. The Community Temperature Reading
2. Stop Mind Reading
3. Clarify Expectations
4. Genogram Your Family
5. Explore the Iceberg
6. Incarnational Listening
7. Climb the Ladder of Integrity

Each skill is anchored in unlocking the application of Scripture for everyday life and relationships. Participants also cultivate a rhythm of meeting with Jesus twice a day using Emotionally Healthy Relationships Day by Day: A 40-Day Journey to Deeply Change Your Relationships. These devotions correspond with the eight weekly themes of this course as well. (Scazzero, Peter. Emotionally Healthy Discipleship, p. 222)

IV. Conclusions and Final Reflection - At the start of this capstone, it was mentioned that the current challenge for everyone not only in the church but including also with the non-religious organization is the need to be emotionally healthy. The numbers are alarming. And if the non-religious organization has recognized the need, how much more that the churches needed to recognize them and start thinking on how the church can serve the people for their well-being. In addition, if God has created everyone not only as a spiritual, relational, intellectual but as an emotional being, then it does make sense that when churches conduct the discipleship program, the emotional aspect should be highly considered for integration in order to be holistic in approach

with the program. If in case that the EHS courses is new, this capstone is inviting the church to be critically open as you read the book.

In conclusion, with the current reality that everyone is facing, the church needs to seriously consider to integrate the emotional aspect into the current discipleship program for few and basic reasons,

1. Because God did not only create man as a spiritual being but as an emotional being as well
2. Because both the spiritual and the emotional aspect has been tainted by sin and both are affected to the worldly values
3. Because the soul aspect correlates, integrates with the other dimension of the self. The two-basic dimension of the self in man is his relationship with God and others
4. Because it is in the soul that man wage war with
5. Because a well processed negative emotions in silence and solitude lead to growth in love, joy, peace, kindness, gentleness and self-control
6. Because it is impossible to be spiritually mature while remaining to the emotionally immature

V. References

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VI. Appendices

- a. **Annex 1 Daily Office** - The Daily Office provides a structured way of spending time with God each day, but it differs from what we tend to think of as “quiet time” or “devotions”. Quiet time and devotions normally take place once a day, usually in the morning, and focus on “getting filled up” for the day or on interceding for the needs of others. The Daily Office takes place at least twice a day, and it is not so much about turning to God to get something as it is turning to God to simply to be with him. The goal of the Daily Office is to pay attention to God throughout the entire day and in the midst of the activities. This is the great challenge for all of us...So why is it called the “Daily Office”? The word office comes from the Latin word *opus*, or “work”. For the early church, the Daily Office-praying at fixed times throughout the day-was always the first “work of God” to be done. Nothing was to interfere with that priority...Routinely setting aside small units of time for morning, midday, and evening prayer infuses the activities of your day with a deep awareness of the sacred-of God (Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Day by Day, pp.10-12).

- b. **Annex 2 Team Questions and Reflection** - Every church, ministry, task force, and team have a certain style that constitutes the spirit or ethos of that particular community. But that doesn't mean culture just “happens.” Culture needs to be created, shaped, and maintained. And the responsibility for doing so resides with the leader. To help you begin thinking about what this might look like in your own church, I've identified six characteristics or qualities of an emotionally healthy church culture:
 1. Slowed-Down Spirituality
 2. Integrity in Leadership
 3. Beneath-the-Surface Discipleship
 4. Healthy Community

5. Passionate Marriages and Singleness

6. Every Person in Full-Time Ministry

Each characteristic is summarized on the pages that follow. After the description of each characteristic, you will find a brief assessment tool and then questions for personal reflection and team discussion. My prayer is that this process will give you the vision and courage to transform the culture of your ministry so profoundly that its impact will be felt for generations.

QUALITY 1: SLOWED-DOWN SPIRITUALITY We slow down our pace in order to be with Jesus, and this is the source from which our activity flows. In a church culture that changes lives, people refuse to allow a hurried world to set the pace for their lives. They choose instead to live by rhythms that are slower and more deliberate. They set aside time each day to immerse themselves in Scripture, silence, and solitude, which are foundational practices for communion with Jesus. Their doing for God flows out of their being with God. As a result, they consistently embrace other spiritual practices, such as Sabbath-keeping and discernment, in order to cultivate their personal relationship with Jesus and avoid living off of the spirituality of others. They willingly learn about the practices of slowed-down spirituality from two thousand years of church history and the global church. They remain profoundly aware that, apart from abiding in Jesus, it is impossible to bear lasting fruit—both as individuals and as a community.

Assessment

To what degree is your culture characterized by slowed-down spirituality? Circle the number on the continuum that best describes your response. Then briefly describe the reasons for the number you circled.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Not all true of our culture</i>					<i>Completely true of our culture</i>				

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- In what ways is your current culture an asset that helps people to slow down and cultivate oneness with Jesus? In what ways is it a liability that makes slowing down harder?
- Briefly reflect on your work and leadership over the last month or so. In what ways were the characteristics of slowed-down spirituality most notably evident? For example, in your attitudes, behaviors, demeanor, pace of life, etc. In what ways were these characteristics most notably absent?

QUALITY 2: INTEGRITY IN LEADERSHIP We do not pretend to be something on the outside that we are not on the inside. In a church culture that changes lives, leaders—staff and volunteer—are intentional about living out of vulnerability and brokenness. They refuse to engage in pretense or impression management. They endeavor to be the same person onstage in public as they are offstage in private. They recognize that their first and most difficult task is to lead themselves so that their work for God is nourished by a deep inner life with God. This ensures that their leadership is not driven by other motives, such as the need for power, approval from others, or success as the world defines and measures it. Through their lives and their leadership, they seek to create an environment in which their people are encouraged to ask questions and give helpful feedback. They also enjoy the freedom to say a healthy “no” as they discern God’s will and set appropriate limits.

Assessment

To what degree is your culture characterized by integrity in leadership? Circle the number on the continuum that best describes your response. Then briefly describe the reasons for the number you circled.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not all true of our culture

Completely true of our culture

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- How would you complete the following sentences?
- Some of the ways our culture directly and indirectly affirms pretense and subtly encourages impression management are . . .
- Some of the ways our culture affirms transparency and encourages people to live out of vulnerability and brokenness are . . .
- In what aspect of your life or leadership are you most tempted to skim over truth, to be less than honest about your struggles, to deny negative emotions, or to pretend to be more or better than you are?

QUALITY 3: BENEATH-THE-SURFACE DISCIPLESHIP We grow in self-awareness because we cannot change that of which we remain unaware. In a church culture that changes lives, no one assumes people are maturing on the basis of activities such as church attendance, small group participation, and serving. Instead, they understand that maturity results when people engage in the slow, hard work of following the crucified Jesus. Leaders carefully teach people how to break free from unhealthy or destructive patterns in their families and culture of origin, and how to live differently in the new family of Jesus. People understand that their past impacts their present, and they are intentional about identifying and facing their beneath-the-surface issues (such as sinful tendencies, unresolved wounds, triggers, etc.). They apply the gospel of grace and the truth of Scripture to every area of life, meeting Jesus in their losses and limits and learning how to love other people as Jesus did. They understand they need to die to the less obvious sins—such as defensiveness, detachment from others, and a lack of vulnerability—as well as the more obvious sins, such as lying or coveting. They also pursue the healthy desires God places in their hearts and celebrate God’s good gifts, such as beauty, nature, laughter, music, and friendships.

Assessment

To what degree is your culture characterized by beneath-the-surface discipleship? Circle the number on the continuum that best describes your response. Then briefly describe the reasons for the number you circled.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not all true of our culture

Completely true of our culture

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- In what ways, if any, does your culture tend to equate increased levels of participation (in programs, events, or serving) with growth and transformation in Christ?
- What beneath-the-surface issues—a sinful tendency, a weakness, a wound, a past failure, or self-protection—have most impacted your leadership in the past recently?

QUALITY 4: HEALTHY COMMUNITY We are committed to learning tools and practices in order to love others like Jesus. In a church culture that changes lives, people recognize that there is a disconnect when those who claim to love Jesus are experienced by others as defensive, judgmental, unapproachable, and unsafe. Thus, leaders teach and train people in how to do relationships as Jesus did. This includes how to speak clearly, respectfully, and honestly; how to listen; and how to clarify expectations. It also includes confronting the elephants in the room, such as “dirty fighting,” and equipping people to master “clean fighting” to negotiate conflicts. As part of living in community, people learn to respect individual viewpoints, choices, and spiritual journeys, allowing each one to take responsibility for his or her own life without blaming or shaming. By sharing and connecting with each other out of their weaknesses and vulnerabilities, they offer a gift of God’s grace to one another and to the world.

Assessment

To what degree is your culture characterized by healthy community? Circle the number on the continuum that best describes your response. Then briefly describe the reasons for the number you circled.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not all true of our culture

Completely true of our culture

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- Every culture has a default mode for negotiating conflict and navigating differing viewpoints. What three words or phrases would you use to describe the default mode of your ministry culture when it comes to conflict and differing viewpoints? In what ways are these words/phrases indicative of a healthy culture? An unhealthy culture?
- What three words or phrases would you use to describe your personal default mode when it comes to conflict and differing viewpoints? What similarities and differences are there between your default mode and that of the larger culture?

QUALITY 5: PASSIONATE MARRIAGES AND SINGLENESS We model God's passionate love for the world by living out of our marriages or singleness. In a church culture that changes lives, the maturity of each person's marriage or singleness is measured not simply by stability or commitment to Christ, but by the degree to which each is becoming a living sign and wonder of God's love for the world. People live out a vision of love that is passionate, intimate, free, and life-giving, recognizing their oneness with Christ is closely connected to their oneness with their spouses or to their close community. They talk openly about sexuality, recognizing the intimate relationship between Christ and his church is to be reflected in the sexual relationship between a husband and wife, or in the chastity of those who are single. They carefully differentiate between "using" people and "loving" people by monitoring the movements of their hearts and treating others as unrepeatable and invaluable beings made in the image of God.

Assessment

To what degree is your culture characterized by passionate marriage and singleness? Circle the number on the continuum that best describes your response. Then briefly describe the reasons for the number you circled.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not all true of our culture

Completely true of our culture

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- In what ways does your culture affirm marriages and singleness as vocations—as two ways of modeling God’s passionate love for the world? What, if any, differences are there in the ways your culture equips married adults and single adults to live out their respective vocations?
- Overall, how would you describe the role your vocation (marriage or singleness) plays in your leadership? To what degree does the way you spend your time and energy reflect that your marriage/singleness—not ministry—is your first priority as a leader?

QUALITY 6: EVERY PERSON IN FULL-TIME MINISTRY We commission every believer to walk in the authority of Jesus at work and in daily life. In a church culture that changes lives, people reject cultural values that view human beings as spectators and consumers. They affirm that every believer is called to full-time ministry for Jesus. Every sphere of daily activity—paid or unpaid work, or retirement—constitutes a field of ministry. They refuse to compartmentalize work and spirituality, viewing work as an act of worship that brings order out of chaos and builds God’s kingdom. They seek to create community within their spheres of influence, integrating new skills for loving well, and reflecting the generosity of God. In the context of their work and daily activities, they practice Jesus’s presence and engage in the slow work of making disciples. Drawing on the foundation of the gospel, they are active in naming and combating language, attitudes,

and behaviors resulting from such evils as racism, classism, sexism, and any other ideology that demeans human beings.

Assessment

To what degree is your culture characterized by every person in full-time ministry? Circle the number on the continuum that best describes your response. Then briefly describe the reasons for the number you circled.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Not all true of our culture</i>					<i>Completely true of our culture</i>				

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- If you were to ask the people in your church to name their ministry, what percentage would name their volunteer service to the church? What percentage would name their sphere of daily activity? Overall, how would you characterize the degree to which your people tend to compartmentalize work and spirituality?
- In what ways does the truth that every person is in full-time ministry challenge you as a leader? In what ways does it encourage you?

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