

PEOPLES NEXT DOOR **NC**

**A MANUAL FOR**

# DISCOVERY & ENGAGEMENT





Copyright © 2015 by Caleb Bridges  
Baptist State Convention of North Carolina  
Requests for copies of this material should be addressed to:  
Caleb Bridges, [peoplesnextdoor@ncbaptist.org](mailto:peoplesnextdoor@ncbaptist.org)

 @pndnc

 [ncbaptist.org](http://ncbaptist.org) • [peoplesnextdoornc.org](http://peoplesnextdoornc.org)



# Table of Contents

Acknowledgments .....	1
Preface .....	2
Introduction .....	3
Mobilize Your Church .....	5
Pray for the Peoples .....	6
Be on Mission Together .....	6
Needed Roles for Discovery and Engagement .....	7
Practical Handles for Mobilization .....	7
Discover People Groups .....	9
Carefully Examine .....	10
Naturally Encounter .....	11
PeopleGroups.info Initiative .....	12
Intentionally Engage .....	15
Focus on a People Group .....	16
Empower Members to Engage .....	18
Strive to Reach the Whole People Group Community .....	20
Start Bible Study Groups .....	23
Identify & Equip Leaders .....	27
Identify Leaders .....	28
Equip Leaders .....	28
Multiply Churches .....	31
End Notes .....	33
Helpful Resources .....	34
Discovery and Engagement Process .....	35
Sample Questions for Discovery .....	36
Practical Handles for Engagement .....	37
Websites for Discovery and Engagement .....	38
Six Foundational Books for Discovery and Engagement .....	39
When Sharing the Gospel with Other Faiths .....	40
<i>Sharing With Buddhists</i>	
<i>Sharing With Folk or Traditionally Animistic Faiths</i>	
<i>Sharing With Hindus</i>	
<i>Sharing With Muslims</i>	
<i>Sharing With Sikhs</i>	

# Acknowledgments

There is no way a work of this magnitude could be done by any one person. A big thank you goes to my dear friend and pastor, C. Keelan Cook. So much of this material has grown out of conversations we had traveling between Wake Forest, N.C. and Washington D.C., as well as many hours sitting in his office. Thank you to Mike Dodson, who as representative of the North American Mission Board on Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's campus, moved mountains to see the discovery and engagement pilot begin in Washington D.C. Thanks to Larry Black for opening the doors there in D.C. through the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia.

We are so grateful to Chuck Register and many others at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina who empowered us to continue the discovery and engagement process here in North Carolina over the past years. Thanks to Bryan Galloway and Terry Sharp from the International Mission Board for their partnership in the PeopleGroups.info Initiative. You two have been of great help to us in framing our conversations in both the primer and the manual. Finally, a huge thanks to my wife. Let's continue adventuring together for His Kingdom.

# Preface

The *Peoples Next Door NC: A Manual for Discovery and Engagement* was written primarily with the English-speaking North American church pastors or lay leaders in mind. However, the document is designed in such a way that any lay person in any local church should be able to pick it up and get a good understanding of how they might immediately go discover and engage people group communities in their city.

It is also important to add that the manual may also be especially helpful to pastors and lay leaders of some of our language churches in North America. Anglos often think that we must retain the responsibility for ensuring that the rest of the majority world hear the gospel. What we fail to realize is that Christians are all over the globe and are going to every place with the gospel. Anglos must partner with believers of other people groups to accomplish the task of seeing the least-reached places and peoples reached. The methodology for which we advocate is much like the international church-planting methods the International Mission Board is employing overseas.

The manual is a continuation of the principles represented in the *Peoples Next Door: A Primer for Discovery and Engagement* written by Keelan Cook, with the Urban Resource Initiative at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. The primer casts vision, provides philosophy and presents general principles to the Church for discovering and engaging people group communities in urban centers in North America. The manual answers the question of how a church might actually go about the process of discovery and engagement from start to finish. The hope is that these two documents might be used both independently of one another and as a series with the manual in succession of the primer.

# Introduction

God is using the growing globalization of the world to generate a higher rate of immigration from other nations to North America. People of all ethnic backgrounds are migrating away from their home countries seeking asylum, refuge, education or a better life in the West. North Carolina cities of Charlotte, Raleigh, Durham, Greensboro, Greenville, Asheville, Winston Salem and others are now becoming saturated with internationals. However, we should not be surprised at this trend. God, in His sovereign will, has seen fit to bring the nations to North America.

**[God] made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God and in the hope that they might feel their way toward Him and find Him.**

**Acts 17:26-27**

God has brought those who were once far from any access to the gospel and has placed them here, just beyond our doorstep. So, how should we, as followers of Jesus Christ, respond to the sovereign work of God bringing the nations to be our neighbors?

I am reminded of a familiar story in the Gospel of Mark that may help us to frame this discussion. In God's Word we see that a scribe comes up to Jesus and asks Him a genuine question of the heart, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" (Mark 12:28). Jesus responded to him by quoting from two places in the books of Moses: "The most important is, 'Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 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'" (Mark 12:28-31).

Jesus has a similar conversation in the Gospel of Luke in which a teacher of the law — desiring to justify himself — asks Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29). Jesus responds profoundly with the parable of the good Samaritan. We all know the story. A traveler was attacked, beaten and left for dead on the side of the road by robbers. By chance, a priest comes that way, sees the beaten man and passes by. Later, a

Levite comes that way. He sees the beaten man and also passes by on the other side of the road. Then a Samaritan comes to where the beaten man is, sees that he was beaten and left for dead, and has compassion on him. He bandages his wounds, places him on his own animal, brings him to an inn and takes care of him. The Samaritan used all of his resources to take care of this man, who was a complete stranger of a different ethnic, cultural and religious background (Luke 10:25-37).

After Jesus tells the teacher this parable, He turns the tables on him and asks, "Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" (Luke 10:36). Of course, "the one who showed him mercy" was a neighbor to this man. Jesus said, "You go, and do likewise" (Luke 10:37).

## Love God. Love Neighbor.

When Jesus says to love your neighbor as yourself in the gospels of Mark and Luke, He brings forward a thought from the Scriptures and establishes it as the second most important teaching of the Scriptures. In fact, He quotes directly from God as He commands His people, "You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself" (Leviticus 19:35). That is huge for us! Here, God has brought the nations as strangers to sojourn among us as representatives of God's people in North Carolina, and He has commanded us to love them. Not just to love them, but to love them as we love ourselves, so that we might be neighbors to them as the Samaritan was a neighbor to the beaten man left for dead on the side of the road.

So, what do you do with the Nepali family whose children will be in class with your kids this fall? With the Afghani entrepreneur opening an eyebrow threading shop next door to where you buy your favorite latte every Sunday afternoon? With the Thai man founding a Buddhist temple in your neighborhood? With the growing Arab community that meets at the local Chick-fil-A once a month for fellowship with friends and family? With the South Asian mosque being constructed down the street from your church building? Or with the Hindu Indian family who are your new neighbors across the cul-de-sac?

God, in His sovereign will, has seen fit to bring the nations to North America. Now it is up to His people to be obedient in reaching the lost with the gospel. In response to this trend, North American church strategies must "shift toward focusing mission on every congregation's immediate context," and not only

some distant community.<sup>1</sup> The growing population of unreached immigrants in North America is evident, and the need for the gospel to permeate these peoples is greater now than ever before. However, before we jump into action, we must first establish a biblical foundation for our Kingdom efforts. Then, we must seek out methods and means for best achieving His mission. Ultimately, the mission of God, seen throughout the grand narrative of Scripture, is the redemption of a people for His own possession, through His gospel, for the sake of His glory.

**All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.**

**Matthew 28:18-20**

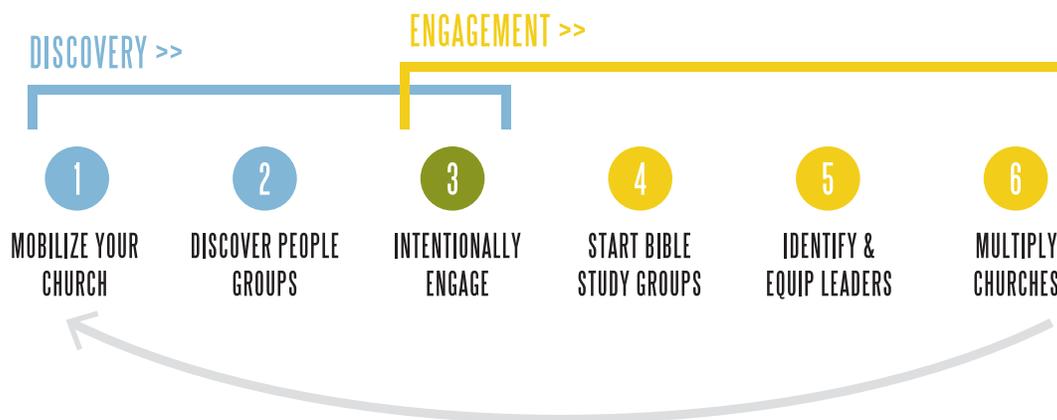
The making of disciples who are disciple-makers is the method that God has chosen to realize His mission. The Church, which “exists both through the gospel and for the gospel,” is the means by which He has chosen to make disciple-makers.<sup>2</sup> Tim Chester and Steve Timmis argue for this point in their book, *Total Church*: “There cannot be mission apart from the local church. The local church is the agent of mission. It is the context in which people are discipled. There can be no sustainable Christian mission without sustainable local Christian communities [the church].”<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, the most effective strategy for making disciple-making disciples of people group communities in North America is the multiplication of churches in these communities.

The goal of Peoples Next Door N.C. and all of its constituents is to mobilize and empower local churches in urban centers throughout North America to discover and engage people group communities with a church multiplication strategy. The general strategy presented in this document is designed for local churches to champion the task of discovering and engaging people groups in their area with the intention of seeing people group churches planted among them. Local churches must take responsibility for and demonstrate ownership of their own individual approaches to reaching the people group populations around them.

While there are broad strategy principles for discovery and engagement, each local church should develop its own practical process for engaging its specific people groups. This grassroots ministry effort by local churches seems to be the best way to bring the gospel in a real, multiplicative way to the masses of international peoples who now call North America home.<sup>4</sup>

The general strategy begins with **(1) mobilizing your church** to **(2) discover people groups** in your city by carefully examining your neighborhoods and naturally encountering people group communities in your day-to-day activities. Once people groups have been discovered, then you must **(3) intentionally engage** them by maintaining a consistent presence in the people group community and continual proclamation of the gospel. This is done with the hope that it will open the door to **(4) start Bible study groups** in their communities. As the Bible study groups grow, you must **(5) identify and equip leaders** from within the group. The process will be complete when you **(6) multiply churches** among the people group populations in your city that multiply regionally and around the world. The new people group churches will then be invited to partner as sister churches with the engaging church, and the cycle continues.





**MOBILIZE YOUR CHURCH**

This is one of the more daunting tasks that any church leader may face. How do I help my members to be about the mission of God within my city and around the world? From the start, prayer must be the driving force behind all that we do.

## Pray for the Peoples

We must remember that the task at hand is not physical, but spiritual, which means that in order to engage people groups well, we must do so in complete and utter dependence upon God to do the work (Ephesians 3:8-10). God, in His sovereignty, has already been orchestrating the migration of these people groups to their current locations so that they might have the opportunity to hear of Him and perhaps seek Him (Acts 17:26-27). We must, through discovery, look to see where He is already working and then strive to come alongside Him in the work there.

Thus, engaging the people group communities in our cities must begin with, be sustained by and end in prayer. Prayer is the moving hand of God by which He has chosen to propel His Kingdom forward. Look in the book of Acts. Prior to every great movement of the Holy Spirit we see in Acts, the people of God were all together in one place in prayer (Acts 1:14, 2:42 and 4:23-31). Practically speaking, it would be wise to develop a prayer strategy within the structure of your church for your efforts among people groups in your city.

Consider these components when developing a prayer strategy for this sort of work. Your prayer strategy must be focused on the specific task of seeing the gospel go forward among the people groups that you and your church are trying to reach. It should be structured so that you are praying not only individually, but also together. Pray together for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the people group communities in your city. Your prayer strategy should involve a committed few, as well as the whole of the church body respectively. Organize your prayer strategy with built-in accountability so that it will remain consistent over a long period of time. This is a principle that we must live by — pray fervently that the Lord would bring to fruition His Kingdom on earth, starting with the people group communities in your city.

## Be on Mission Together

As you and your church begin to look and see where God is working and how you might come alongside Him there, consider whom it is within your local body

who might become involved in reaching people group populations in your city. There will need to be at least three levels of involvement from any church — pastoral leadership, lay leadership and the participation of everyone.

As a pastor, you have the unique privilege of being before your people in the pulpit on a regular basis. You can use that time to cast the vision of reaching unreached people groups in your city and around the world. As you regularly remind your members of cross-cultural mission in your teaching, your people will begin to see the heart of God for the nations. Hopefully, by keeping the mission ever before the people, it will lead them to obedience to the Great Commission and great commandments in their day-to-day lives. It may even be helpful to take four to six weeks of a Sunday or Wednesday night service to teach your people what God's Word says about the responsibility of His Church and every Christian in His redemptive plan for the world.

Lay leaders — whether Sunday School teachers, youth or children's leaders, small group leaders, missional groups leaders or Woman's Missionary Union ladies — also have ability to cast vision to the other members in your church. Use whatever platforms you have within your local body to call others in your congregation to begin discovering and engaging people group communities in your city. Lay leaders also tend to be extremely helpful in training and equipping leaders both within their own congregation and among new believers in people group communities. Due to their unique role, they are often able to show others in their sphere of influence how to go cross-culturally with the gospel. They expect others to follow their example, and they hold them accountable to doing so.

Everyone in your church can, at a minimum, pray for the people groups both in your area and around the world. Everyone can participate in the discovery of people groups around where they live, work and play. Every member should be able to engage people from people group communities in your city. While some may become more committed and devote more time to reaching people groups in their community than others, that does not lessen the value of the others involved. In this work, there will be a need for a variety of giftings from all parts of the church. Ultimately, we

will need the whole church working together to fulfill the commands of Christ in its city and around the world.

## Needed Roles for Discovery and Engagement

There are three primary roles that will need to be filled within any church that is considering people group work: advocates, architects, and engagers. Look to identify these people in your congregation.



**Advocates are the heart** of people group discovery and engagement. They are casting vision, providing motivation and communicating the need. They are individuals who continually advocate for their church's involvement in reaching the people group communities in their city. They send out emails, speak to Sunday School classes, preach from the pulpit and even share with others over the dinner table at home. Within the local church, pastors and lay leaders will have the greatest opportunity to be advocates for people group discovery and engagement. At a grander level, associational missionaries, state convention representatives, seminary delegates and even mission board personnel can also be advocates for this work on a regional, statewide, national and even global scale.



**Architects are the head** of people group discovery and engagement. They help to provide strategy, information analysis and the creation of vision-casting tools. These are people who have a keen understanding for where the people group communities are in the city. As the church goes about discovering which people groups are in its city and where they are, these architects will devote significant time to capturing and collecting that information about people group communities and map the progress of discovery. A good architect is someone who is able to take a lot of information and organize and authenticate it. A good architect will then turn that information into a tool for casting vision, providing avenues for engagement and developing next-step strategies. More information on the role of an architect is included in the discover section related to the *PeopleGroups.info* initiative.



While you may only have a few advocates and architects in your church, **you will have many engagers**. The term engager is fairly self-explanatory. **Engagers are the hands** of people group discovery and engagement. They will spend most of their time in the community with the people, learning about them and sharing their lives and the gospel with them. Most advocates and architects will also be engagers, though you may have quite a few engagers within your congregation who are not advocates or architects but only spend their time within the people group communities. Advocates, architects and engagers are not hard and fast roles, and often one person can hold two or three. We use these terms to illustrate what kinds of people might be needed to begin people group work in your city.

## Practical Handles for Mobilization

As you think through utilizing the different levels of involvement and helping your congregation into these roles to begin discovering and engaging people groups in your city, consider these practical handles for mobilization. Help to organize a churchwide time of prayer for the peoples of the world. Strive

to create a culture of prayer for salvation of the lost within your church. Begin praying for the salvation of unreached and unengaged people groups around the world, especially for those with whom those in your congregation may already have a connection. Pray specifically for the salvation of any people group populations that you may know of that have migrated to your city or state. Pray to the Lord of the harvest, that He would send out laborers into the harvest from within

your church. As you begin to regularly pray in this way, you will begin to see a softening of the hearts of your people toward the lost.

Begin to seek out any existing contacts you may have with individuals, pastors or missionaries who have worked among people group populations, whether in your area or around the world. These relationships, spanning literally across the world, can be extremely advantageous when engaging people groups in your own locale. After a conversation with one pastor about the need to reach the Filipino population in this city, we realized that his church had hosted a Filipino congregation in its building several years prior. He quickly realized that the first step in getting the gospel to the unreached Filipinos in his city would involve reaching out to this Filipino congregation. Perhaps some sort of partnership might be formed for the purpose of getting the gospel to the lost among the Filipino community. Capitalize on those relationships that God has already given you and your congregation with believers and nonbelievers from around the world. They will be of great help as you begin to engage people groups in your city.

Also, look within your congregation for members who may potentially become involved or even champions for people group work either locally or around the world. Perhaps God has already been working on the hearts of some of your people. One of the best ways to determine this is by getting your people in close proximity to people group communities in your city. This is especially helpful on the front end for those who are in leadership within the church. By taking your pastors, staff, deacons or lay leaders on a cross-cultural excursion in the city in which they live, their eyes will be opened to the lostness and Kingdom potential around them.

David Platt, president of the International Mission Board, once told a similar story about his own life. When he went on one of his first short-term mission trips to Kenya, he found himself in one of the largest slums in all of Africa. The poverty he saw in that moment completely overwhelmed him and filled him with compassion. Now look at all that he has done for the sake of calling others to the work of missions. He has since written two deeply challenging books, *Radical* and *Counter Culture*, and is leading the Southern Baptist Convention in mission as the president of the International Mission Board. Think about how exposure to the lostness of people group populations in the area surrounding your church membership might cause your leaders to become both

advocates for others to engage and engagers of those people themselves.

A cross-cultural excursion can be done with a large or small amount of people. The only caveat for larger groups would be to break the larger number down into groups of two or three. Use tools like Urban Spoon, Google or Google Maps to locate businesses in your area that may be owned or operated by individuals from other places around the world. Then plan to take a few people from your church to visit a mosque or Hindu temple, eat at an Indian-Asian restaurant and then start conversations at a couple of Indian grocery stores in the area.

The hope is that as you and your members experience the lostness yourselves, you will be filled with compassion for these people. Once you have visited these places, schedule some debriefing time where you can ask questions of your staff, lay leaders and other church members. Ask each of them, "You have seen the peoples in our city, what do you think we should do about it? How could each person be involved in this initiative? Whom else might we be able to bring to this initiative? How can we cast vision to the rest of the church? What are the next steps for each of us personally and our congregation as a whole?"

There are many things that keep us from being a part of the mission of God in our own cities. Five hurdles we must overcome are: fear, pride, apathy, personal preferences and prejudice. We are afraid of our Muslim neighbor. Our pride is so great that we refuse to be served. Apathy rules our hearts. We care primarily for ourselves and refuse to make sacrifices in our lives for the sake of the gospel. In fact, why would we make sacrifices for 'those illegal immigrants' who just need to be deported or for 'those Muslims' who must all be terrorists? Ultimately, the greatest impediment to reaching the nations God has brought to be our new neighbors is, well, us.

Once you have had some exposure to the peoples in your city and are beginning to develop a biblical sense of compassion for them, you will need to think through which people group you and your church desire to focus on. You may find that in order to make that decision wisely, you devote some time to discovering which people groups are in your locale and where they are in your community.



DISCOVER PEOPLE GROUPS

Doing the work of discovery is of great importance in engaging people group communities within the North American context because these people are hidden. These groups are not trying to hide, but we don't see them because we are not intentionally looking for them. They exist within the same geographic areas as we do, only within different social circles. So we live, breathe and operate every day within our own circles and never even realize that there are these people group communities all around us.

The purpose of discovery is to understand the people group populations in our geographic area. We want to know who they are and their demographic size within our locale. We want to understand where it is that these people groups are living, working, shopping, worshiping and playing. We want to tap into an understanding of their worldview and religion, as well as whether or not these people groups are reached or engaged with the gospel.

According to the International Mission Board, there are 11,168 unique people groups in the world.

**A people group is an ethno-linguistic group of people who self-identify with one another in culture, ethnicity and language.**

People group is the terminology the International Mission Board has chosen to use to describe the term "all ethne" found in Matthew 28:19. Of these 11,000-plus people groups, 6,544 are considered unreached. A people group is considered unreached when less than 2 percent of that group is found to be evangelical Christian. Of the 11,000-plus people groups worldwide, 2,982 are considered unreached and unengaged. This means that they are less than 2 percent reached, and there is no gospel work being done among them. We are talking about people who are lost and don't know the Lord, yet there is no one who can speak their language and is willing to go and tell them.<sup>5</sup> These people will be born, live their entire lives and die without ever even having the opportunity to meet someone who could tell them about Jesus.

Many of these unreached or unengaged people groups are actually migrating here to North America. This then, is an unprecedented period in the history of missions! People who were once geographically far from those who might be able to share the gospel with them have now been brought near to us. This makes it possible for the gospel to advance literally around the world among these people groups through the efforts of the North American Church in its own backyard.

## Carefully Examine

Discovering the people group populations in your locale is done by employing three overlapping action steps.<sup>6</sup> The first of these is to **carefully examine**. J.D. Payne presents a phenomenal example of this in his work, *Strangers Next Door*. In a significant portion of this book, Payne describes the state of North America due to immigration. Many of the records he uses are from the U.S. census and portray in astonishing fashion the great wave of immigration from all over the world, especially over the past 30 to 40 years. He uses this information as a stepping-stone to call the North American Church to action. The Lord has brought the nations to us; we must respond by taking the gospel across the street to our neighbor.

At this point, it is important to bring to bear three general divisions within the people group segment of the greater population in our cities: international students, refugee/asylum seekers and immigrants. Each of these three will require its own unique approaches and strategies of both discovery and engagement.

On a practical level, you may carefully examine your own community by spending some time of your own making sense of the census data in your own locale. However, census data will never get us where we want to go. You may also use things like Urban Spoon, Google or Google Maps as tools to look up businesses in your area that may be owned by people group populations in your city.

Keelan Cook, with the Urban Resource Initiative at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, was in Washington D.C. one day trying to figure out how to find a particular people group in the city. He had been sitting in a coffee shop not far from the National Mall thinking on this for some time, when his stomach reminded him that it was about lunchtime. He promptly pulled out his cell phone to use Urban Spoon to locate restaurants in his vicinity. One of the categories happened to be Ethiopian, the very group he had been considering. It was then that he realized that he could use these restaurants and other businesses to be able to understand the people group presence within the city.

## Naturally Encounter

The second step of discovery is to **naturally encounter** individuals from other ethnic backgrounds by visiting **points of interest** — ethnic establishments of some kind. These could be businesses, markets, groceries, salons, apartment complexes, neighborhoods, worship centers, general businesses or other brick-and-mortar locations that can be positively connected to a specific people group. These points serve as gateways into any people group community.

Imagine the city as if it were a huge mansion with many doors. Each door is a point of interest. Some doors are more hidden than others, but all are important for understanding the people group populations within your locale. Within this illustration, natural encounters require you to knock on every door you find and have conversations with whomever comes to answer the door. Your hope through these natural conversations is to understand who is inside and ultimately be invited to enter in.

Finding and frequenting these points of interest becomes the foundation for the strategy of any local church as it engages people groups around itself. It is here that you will meet individuals and ask questions to better understand the community in which they live. It is also here that you will build relationships that will allow you to enter into the socio-economic circles of that community. You will learn where people are from, where they are in the area, and if there are any leaders in their community.

The first question you may be asking is where you should start to look for points of interest. Start right around your local church, home or workplace. What points of interest might be within your sphere of influence? Begin to walk or drive through those neighborhoods and shopping centers looking for points of interest. Then go in and start a conversation. On your way to and from work, observe the stores you are passing on the street. Could any of them be owned by someone from around the world? Stop on your way home at that Mediterranean market and begin to learn about the shop owner and his background.

So how do we start? We must go into these points of interest with a **posture of humility** and an **attitude of a learner**. Desire to truly understand our new neighbors, because we actually want to befriend them and love them as ourselves. I am reminded of Christ in this.

**“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”**

**Philippians 2:5-8**

Look for ways to build context for friendship from the moment you walk in the door of their establishment. Ask about the paintings you see hanging on the wall or the strange-looking fruit they have for sale at the front of the store. Be honest from the beginning about who you are as a believer, and be willing to share about your own life and family as you learn about theirs. As you are naturally learning about others through conversations, there are three important questions that will begin to frame the way you understand their communities: Where are they from? Where are they now? Are there any persons of influence in their people group community?

The question about where they are from encompasses conversations about their country of origin, their primary language spoken in the home, their culture, worldview, religious practices and festivals. Understanding where they are now includes conversations about where it is that they are living, working, worshiping, shopping and playing. It also includes discussions around how their worldviews and religious practices may be changing in their new context. What festivals have remained important? What celebrations may have been added since their arrival?

Through questions like these, you will be able to ascertain the story of how they and their people came to be who and where they are today. They also help you to understand what goals and aspirations they may have for the future. At the end of this document, you will find a handout that lists ideas for questions that may be used within cross-cultural conversations. Use this as a resource when beginning to encounter individuals from people group communities at points of interest in your area.

Some of these individuals may ask you why you are in their store or why you are asking so many questions.

When this happens, be honest. You have nothing to hide. However, it is sometimes incredibly important how you answer. You don't want to share with them that you are there to discover or engage them. That could cause them to become very defensive, and may keep you from being able to continue the relationship. Be honest about your intentions, but do so in such a way that communicates both the love of Christ and your love for them. **They are not a project — they are people.** Interact with them as such.

When I am put in this sort of situation, I usually tell them that I am a Christian and belong to such-and-such church down the street. I often share with them the story from God's Word where Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment of all. He answered that the first is to love God and the second to love neighbor. I will share with them how the man in the story tried to justify himself by asking who exactly was his neighbor. Jesus, knowing the man's motives, shares with him a story about a Jewish man who was beaten, robbed and left on the side of the road. The one who helped this man happened to be of a people group called the Samaritans, the despised northern neighbors of the Jews (Luke 10:25-37).

This Samaritan man acted as a neighbor to the beaten Jewish man on the side of the road even though these two ethnicities did not typically associate with one another. Jesus uses this story of the Samaritan neighbor to show that the command to love neighbor as one's self in Leviticus is in reference to the outsider among them (Leviticus 19:9-18 [ESV]). I will share that I believe the North American Church has done a very poor job of following this command. We don't love our neighbor. We don't even know our neighbor. So the first step in remedying this is to meet my neighbors — those of other ethnic backgrounds in my city. Then I will ask them if we might become friends. Most people admire this sort of a response, encourage you in it, and will often desire your friendship.

## PeopleGroups.info Initiative

If discovery is a local church's effort to find points of interest in the area surrounding their church for the purpose of engaging the hidden people group communities there, think what it might look like for a collection of churches to combine their efforts in a city-wide discovery strategy. Then imagine a continent-wide strategy to discover every people group community in every city in North America. Enter the *PeopleGroups.info* initiative. As your church begins

to understand the people group communities in your locale, you should also see yourself through the lens of a greater collaborative effort to discover and engage unreached and unengaged people groups throughout North America. Use *peoplegroups.info* as a database to house the information you are gathering about the points of interest and people groups being discovered. There are several reasons for the importance of recording information gathered about people groups in *peoplegroups.info*.

One of the most obvious advantages to everyone across the continent recording their information in a centralized location like *peoplegroups.info* is that you will have access to everyone else's knowledge about people groups in other cities. For example, say that your church located in Greenville, S.C., decided to focus on the Gujarati people group from northwestern India. Your church has spent several months working to develop an understanding of where this people group is in your city.

Through cross-cultural conversations at points of interest in your area, you discover that many of the people have familial ties to Gujarati living in Morrisville, N.C. So you open up *peoplegroups.info* and realize that there is, in fact, a large community of Gujarati who have made Morrisville their home. Several churches in the Raleigh-Durham area have already begun to record their discoveries of points of interest in *peoplegroups.info*. Already, there is potential for a partnership to develop between churches across city and state lines to reach the Gujarati people who have migrated to these two cities.

The reverse is also true. Because of the diligence of these local churches in the Raleigh-Durham area to record their information about the Gujarati people group living in Morrisville, this church in Greenville, S.C., is able to find their information, contact these churches and develop a partnership to reach the Gujarati in Morrisville. Through their faithfulness in updating *peoplegroups.info* with information gathered in people-group discovery, these churches were able to solicit the help of this church in Greenville, S.C. The same could also be true for missionaries coming home from the field who are looking to discover where their people group is in North America. Perhaps they open up *peoplegroups.info* and find that your church has discovered and recorded their people group living in your city. That missionary will likely want to get in contact with your church to discuss how he or she might be able to help your church engage that people group with the gospel.

By recording gathered information into *peoplegroups.info*, the combined efforts of churches and missionaries in multiple cities and around the world could lead to Kingdom advancement among the Gujarati people. A network of those engaging the same or similar people groups could be formed for the purpose of collaboration, cooperation, shared resources and shared expertise. Not only that, but these people group communities are also networked together across the globe. Why would we not try to do the same thing in hopes that the gospel might spread through existing networks of peoples spanning across the globe?

In addition to these advantages, with *peoplegroups.info* we have the ability to visualize points of interest and people groups in your city in the form of a map. Having a map of the people groups and points of interest in your city does two important things. The map becomes a vision-casting tool that can be used to advocate for others to join the work of people-group discovery and engagement in your area. When your church member looks at the map, he will see that there are three Pakistani points of interest

within walking distance of his home — a grocery store, a kebab restaurant and a mosque — that can be used in a powerful way and awaken him to the need to engage those who are right around him. Not only that, but the map also becomes an important tool for those who are engaging these people groups in your city. The map allows the engaging churches to see where points of interest may be clustering within a city, which in turn allows churches to know and understand where they need to be spending their time if they desire to see the gospel go forward among a particular people group in the city.

Now the only remaining piece for *peoplegroups.info* is “how.” How do you record the information you are gathering about people group populations? An “as you go” methodology is the best way to record the information that you are gathering. There are two forms that have been created for just this purpose — one to add people groups and the other to add points of interest. Note that the links to these forms, along with some further discussion on the topic, are located in an appendix at the end of this document.



# INTENTIONALLY ENGAGE

HOT	ICED
2.49	2.77
3.49	
3.00	
3.00	
3.24	4.02
3.70	
4.25	4.50
4.25	4.50
4.16	4.50
3.24	3.70

HOT	ICED
varies	pour over coffee - varies
3.99	rishi masala chai - 4.02
3.99	bhakti ginger chai - 4.02
3.99	loose leaf rishi tea - 3.00
earl grey	maté lemongrass
ceylon single estate	turmeric ginger
wuli oolong	tangerine ginger
jasmine green	bergamot sage
moroccan mint green	mystic mint
Italian Soda - Flavors vary	3.24

ORDER HERE



There is a seamless relationship between discovery and engagement. If people in your church have already been out in the surrounding neighborhoods discovering people group communities there, then they have already been building relationships naturally with individuals from these communities that have the potential for long-term engagement.

## Focus on a People Group

Often, when churches begin to discover people groups in the area surrounding their congregation, they realize that there are in fact a plethora of people groups with whom they might engage. While it is reasonable to assume that your church is responsible for reaching all of the people groups around you, this is not always the best way to approach it. We do want every people group around us to come to saving faith in Jesus Christ, but going about it without a clear focus is not always the most effective strategy.

Take for example two different classes of gun — a shotgun and a rifle. A shotgun is highly powerful in the short range, but after only a few yards, the gunshot begins to break up and spread out, causing it to become less accurate and effective over long distances. A high-powered rifle, on the other hand, fires one larger bullet that will remain accurate and effective in both close and long range. Consider this example as your church begins to craft your strategy for reaching the people group populations, both in your locale and around the world.

This concept is especially helpful in relation to the Great Commission. Immediately prior to His ascension into heaven, Christ gave His followers marching orders. He commanded them to “make disciples of all nations” and assured them that by His authority, they would be His “witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8). Using this geographic paradigm, any local church can begin to create a comprehensive strategy to reach peoples, from the local level to around the world, with the gospel. We have to realize that every church begins at a different point.

Perhaps your church has fewer than 100 members and is located in a more rural neighborhood. The idea of sending a short-term mission team to partner with a missionary in northern Vietnam working among Buddhists sounds impossible. Well, what if you were able to structure your Acts 1:8 paradigm a little closer to home while still reaching peoples from the ends of the earth? What if you were to discover that there

is a Buddhist Vietnamese community that owns and operates all five of the nail salons in your small town? Then through some further discovery, you find that there is a Buddhist Vietnamese temple located two hours away in one of the larger cities in your state. What if your small rural church began to reach out to these Buddhist Vietnamese by sending some ladies to get their nails done every week at these nail salons?

Through conversations every week, your church ladies find out that there is a large community of these Vietnamese people who have been looking for someone to teach them English for some time. You then have the opportunity to use teaching English as a second language as a means of introducing these people to the gospel. Say your church ladies offer to teach conversational English using stories from the Bible in the homes of these Vietnamese families. You just birthed a Bible study among this Buddhist Vietnamese community, and it all started by getting your nails done!

As your church members continue to integrate with the Buddhist Vietnamese community, you realize that they are traveling two hours to the temple in the city several times a year to celebrate cultural festivals. Perhaps some of your members are invited to join in the celebration. They go and meet other Vietnamese who live in the city around the temple. What if you were able to partner with a church nearer to the Buddhist temple that would work with you to reach Vietnamese there? Before you know it, a network of churches that are all engaging this people group is beginning to form. Imagine these efforts leading to Vietnamese Buddhists in your state coming to faith in Christ, being trained and equipped, and then going back to their country of origin as missionaries to reach unreached people groups there with the gospel.

One small, predominantly Anglo-American church, located about an hour and a half outside of Washington D.C., approached it from another perspective. They partnered first with the International Mission Board to adopt an unreached and unengaged people group, the Biafada of Guinea Bissau in West Africa. Working with IMB missionaries on the ground,

they developed a strategy through short-term mission trips to see churches planted among this people group in Guinea Bissau. When they discovered there was a large population of West African Muslims living northeast of Washington D.C., they immediately began to see how they might begin to reach that community with the gospel as well. Through the providence of God, a small, predominantly African-American church caught the vision for seeing this West African community in D.C. reached with the gospel as well. Immediately, these two churches began working together to prayerwalk, develop gospel-centered relationships and evangelize in that area of the city. The hope is to see Bible study groups started and ultimately churches multiplied among the West African Muslims there.

In both of these cases, the engaging churches developed a focus on a specific people group. Why? First, engaging the same or a similar people group locally, regionally and on the other side of the world brings continuity to what your church is doing. You are able to give your members knowledge and skills to be on mission in your immediate local context that will transfer over to regional and international church-planting work. What if, in your own city, your members were learning to greet their Moroccan neighbors in Berber, becoming skilled at navigating cultural norms in their neighbor's homes and sharing the gospel with their neighbors within an Islamic worldview? Imagine the kind of support your members would provide through short-term mission trips to the churches laboring among the Berbers in New York City or to the missionaries in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco.

Second, these people group populations living in our cities are networked throughout the entire world already through familial and other relational ties. If they are, then we should strive to be as well. Our church has begun a focused work among the Sene-Gambian Wolof community living in Raleigh. My wife and I took a trip up to New York City to visit some new friends who were working among a West African people group in Harlem and the Bronx. Within a few hours of conversations there in Harlem with Senegalese, we realized the two communities were most definitely interconnected. Our relationships with Senegalese in North Carolina began to lead to inroads in the Senegalese community in NYC, and vice versa. One campus pastor in the Raleigh area has seen many former Buddhist Chinese students come to faith in Christ. Within days, these students were sharing the gospel over Skype with family living in Los Angeles and even back in China. One such student even started

a house church by sharing the gospel with his family back home.

Another brother, Chris, was a missionary in Mali for a couple years. He struggled to get the gospel to several villages in Mali that were extremely hostile to him and did not allow him to share with them about Jesus. When he returned to North America, he was able to find his people group in New York City. After building relationships with individuals, who by the providence of God happened to be the purse strings of those very same villages, he was able to return and see churches planted there among them in Mali.

When you begin to engage people group communities locally, you will realize that they are connected and networked with others from their group across the globe. Can you envision the global impact of the gospel-centered relationships you are building with people group communities in your neighborhoods? As believers, we need to be using globalization in this way for the global advancement of the gospel.

As you think about focusing the attention of your church on a particular people group in your city, how do you know which one to focus on? Consider several factors that will help to frame this decision-making process. First, pray and ask the Lord to show you where He is already working among the people groups in your city. Then join Him in that work. Second, if you focus on a people group that is in close geographical proximity to your congregation, then your members will have an easier time of living life with those in your focus people group.

Third, you may want to focus on a people group that is already close to the heart of your members. For example, if your church has been sending short-term teams to partner with a missionary in India who is working with the Punjabi people, then it will be much easier for them to get excited about reaching the same (or a similar) people group in your city. Use connections your members already have around the world to inform whom and how to engage people groups locally. Allow the Spirit to work, and follow the Lord's leading as He places compassion and zeal in the hearts of your people for different people groups in your city.

Fourth, do a little research on the people groups you are discovering in your city. Are they considered unreached or unengaged by the International Mission Board?<sup>7</sup> How easy is it to get the gospel to them in their country of origin?<sup>8</sup> In their home context, do they

have the freedom to come to faith in Christ without persecution? Are we required to hike through the Himalayas for days just to get to where they are? Is there any threat to the life of the missionary as he goes to tell them about the gospel?<sup>9</sup> What is the global and local population of these people groups? These are all important questions when trying to prioritize which people groups have the greatest need.

## Empower Members to Engage

Once a church has spent some time discovering, praying over and developing a focus on a particular people group to engage in its locale, it must figure out how to empower its members to do the work of engagement. If your membership has already been about discovery, this may actually be a seamless transition. Begin to cast the vision to your membership: “We want to see this people group in our community and around the world reached with the gospel.” Then, give them practical handles on how they can go about accomplishing that vision.

Help your members recognize how they can be about the mission in their everyday lives. Help them see that “most gospel ministry involves ordinary people doing ordinary things with gospel intentionality.”<sup>10</sup> They need to understand that you are not asking them to do something all that different than what they are already doing — only to do similar things with different people.

**“Most gospel ministry involves ordinary people doing ordinary things with gospel intentionality.”**

**Steve Timmis**

Think about the establishment of the church of Antioch in the book of Acts. The Word of the Lord says, “Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the Word to no one except Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus” (Acts 11:19-20). Did you catch that? “Some men” planted the church in Antioch. This is the very church that would send out the apostle Paul in Acts 13, perhaps the greatest missionary to have ever lived—and we don’t even know their names. Don’t ever discount yourself or your part to play in the mission of God. Don’t ever think that God cannot use you in a powerful way to further His Kingdom. He did just

that with these ordinary guys from Cyprus and Cyrene simply because they were faithful to proclaim the truth of Christ as they went.

As my wife and I began to wrestle with this concept of faithfulness in the mission of God, we realized that we were filling every evening of every week with good people — primarily relationships with other believers. We realized that we had no margin in our lives to spend time with lost people. Something needed to change. I imagine that if we were honest with ourselves, many of our lives look this way. We have to learn to pattern our lives so that we are intentionally reaching into the lives of our lost neighbors and friends, no matter their cultural, national or linguistic background.

Engaging a people group in your city looks like your members rearranging small things in their lives in order to create space for natural encounters with people from that group. Encourage your members to think through how they might shop, play, work or live in the same places that people from that people group shop, play, work and live. One pastor actually printed out all of the points of interest in their city for their focus people group and handed it out with the Sunday bulletin. As a part of his sermon that morning, he challenged his membership to think through how they might make small changes in their lives to create opportunities to be at these points of interest and meet people. He challenged them to rearrange their lives to live life with those from their focus people group, allowing them to experience the gospel in both word and deed.

So practically speaking, what does this look like? Consider these practical ideas for ways to rearrange small things in your life for the sake of gospel intentionality. What if you were to buy your bread, rice or spices at an ethnic grocery store every week? Many times, you may meet individuals from people groups in the service industry. When you discover that an Afghani lady named Fatimah runs the cash register at Wal-Mart every Thursday night, let that become when and where you do your grocery shopping. Over the course of four months, a friend did this. Because of his consistency, he was able to invite his Senegalese cashier over to his home for dinner. When my friend shared that he was a follower of Christ, the Senegalese man said that he wished more people in America were like him. In 18 years of living in America, he had never been in an American’s home.

Become a regular at an ethnic restaurant. Share with them that you are a Christian. Spend some time

learning about the family, worldview and needs of those who work there. You may find that the owner's children are in need of an English teacher. Offer to come in the afternoons or late evenings when the restaurant is not as busy to teach their children English from the Bible.

Many Christians are intimidated to share the gospel with those of other faiths because they are not knowledgeable of those other faiths. Go to your neighborhood mosque or temple and ask to learn about the faith of those who attend there. Enter with a posture of humility and an attitude of a learner. Ask genuine questions and spend time understanding their worldview. Be slow to speak at first. Then when it is your opportunity to speak, you can address the questions that their worldview is asking. In so doing, you will meet them where they are.

In late afternoons, take walks through apartment complexes or neighborhoods where you know there are many from your focus people group. Stop and talk to people who are also taking an evening walk. Let that be the beginning of a relationship where you might invite them over for dinner, or perhaps they might invite you over to taste some of their ethnic food.

One sister has made it her passion to see Muslim women in our city come to faith in Christ. She started by regularly getting her eyebrows threaded at a Pakistani-owned eyebrow threading salon at the mall. From the beginning, she shared with them that she was a Christian and member of a local church in the area. Over the course of about two months, she would go back by to say hello. She brought them gifts to let them know she was thinking about and praying for them. Eventually, one of the ladies invited her over for dinner so that she could meet her daughters. That night, she shared the gospel clearly with them. Two weeks later, one of the daughters joined our sister for the end of our Sunday morning gathering, just because she was interested in learning more. At lunch that day, she was able to share the gospel even more clearly in light of some of the things that were said in the service.

After a lay leader had challenged the membership of his church to go across cultures in their city with the gospel, Adam (a member of this church) came up to the lay leader and said that there was just no way he had time to do this. His life was just too busy. With full-time work, school, a wife and three children, he just didn't have time to add this into his schedule. The lay leader encouraged him to ask the Lord to give him opportunity to take the gospel cross-culturally within

his current schedule. He encouraged him to think about how he might be able to stop by a point of interest on his way to or from work to begin meeting folks from their focus people group. The very next Monday, Adam realized that he worked with two Muslim men from West Africa. Convicted by the Spirit, he immediately began to reach out to these co-workers in an effort to invite them over to his home for dinner. A month or two later, Adam and his family found themselves in the home of one of these West African coworkers for dinner. That night, Adam had the privilege of sharing threads of the gospel with his hosts.

The point here is that in order to meet people from your focus people group, you need to be in and among the people. These encounters can lead to your building friendships with them, inviting them into your home and being invited into theirs. Hopefully, that will lead to a Bible study in their home that will lead to a church being planted among their people group in your city. There are two fundamental characteristics of good engagement: **consistency of presence** and **proclamation**.

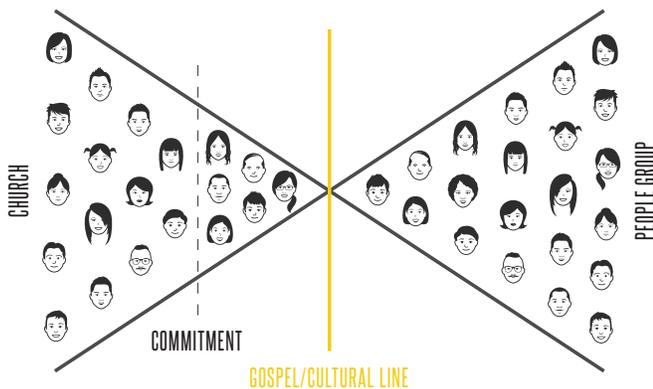
Maintaining a regular presence within the people group community is quite possibly the most important characteristic of any strategy to reach people group communities in a North American context. These people groups are hidden. By maintaining a presence among them, you will build trust and enter further into the community. Sustaining continual gospel proclamation through both word and deed is incredibly important as well. Let them not only hear the gospel proclaimed, but also show them what the community of faith looks like through your hospitality.

Oftentimes, highly evangelistic church members tend to be most involved in serving the church in other ways — youth ministry, children's ministry, choir, etc. Because they are so involved within the church, they have little time to be evangelistic in the community. There are several pastors I know of who have chosen to celebrate evangelism as a service to their local church. They have done this by going to highly evangelistic church members and freeing them up from extra responsibilities within the church to do more in the community.

As an answer to this problem in his church, one pastor formed together and set apart a small group of individuals who were already extremely active in cross-cultural evangelism in the city. He asked that they consider how they might stop serving so much within the church so that they might devote more time

to serving the church through evangelism. As a pastor, you may want to consider doing something like this with folks who begin to take ownership for reaching people group populations in your city.

Though the number of church members who are engaging your focus people group may start out small, encourage those who are more committed to take other members with them as they go. Say, for example, you have 70 members in your congregation. You hold an informational members meeting to develop and discuss a strategy to reach a particular people group community in your city, and only seven people attend. Challenge those seven to tell two other members who were not at the meeting about the strategy you develop. This will ensure that the vision and strategy are being pushed out throughout more of the membership.



Then encourage those seven to seek out and take other members with them as they go about meeting people from your focus people group that week. This will help to grow the involvement of your entire church in the mission of seeing Bible study groups started in that people group community, and ultimately, in their coming to faith in Christ. Practically, Christ sent His disciples out in pairs into the outlying cities as witnesses to the coming Kingdom. This is an important thing for us to mimic in the present day. Rarely go by yourself to share the gospel with a friend. Always take a brother or sister with you so that you can always be discipling one another as you go. God has saved us out of sin, into His Church and onto His mission. But we go about His mission together.

Hopefully, you've noticed at this point that none of the recommendations for engagement involve planned events. Many times, our first thought is to plan some event that would allow us to meet individuals from the people group community. Preplanned "events" have a role to play in church life, but **the bedrock of gospel**

**ministry is low-key, ordinary, day-to-day work that often goes unseen.**"<sup>11</sup> By incorporating a purely event-based strategy for engagement, you are subtly sending the message that evangelism and mission is something you schedule into your life rather than something that is a part of your lifestyle. Mission then becomes dependent on the events. We don't want that.

We have to help our members see how they can live day-to-day on mission among people group communities in their ordinary lives. Now with that said, events can be helpful on some occasions. There is only one caveat: every event must emphasize relationship building around the central focus of the gospel.

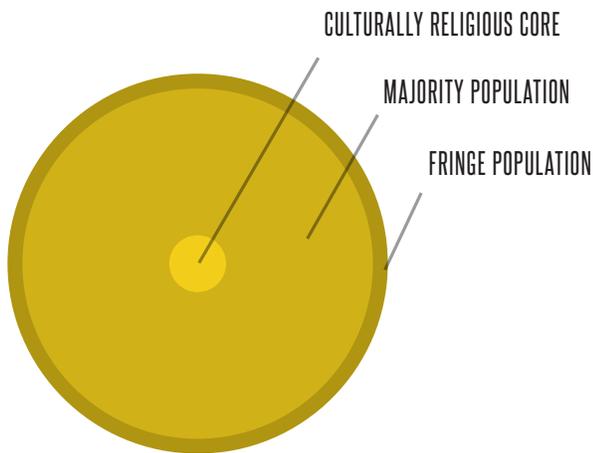
In the handouts section of this document, you should find a sheet entitled "Practical Handles for Engagement." This handout is not meant to be an exhaustive list of ideas for good engagement. As your church learns about your particular people group within your particular context, you may find that there are other practices that would work even better. Let this handout be a stepping-stone to hundreds of other ideas for engaging your focus people group within the context of your city.

## Strive to Reach the Whole People Group Community

One pastor shared about a Muslim Syrian family who had moved in directly next door to him. Over the course of several months, this Syrian family had been over for dinner in his home on numerous occasions. Their children played together in the afternoons after school, and the Syrian neighbors even invited the pastor and his family to a monthly Syrian gathering in the city. Over 100 Syrians gather together every month at the neighborhood Chick-fil-A. He and his family went and were able to meet dozens of other Syrians from the community.

In light of this, his question was whether or not he should invite this family to their Sunday morning gathering. Isn't this how most of us think though? We want to invite others to the join in our community. This is actually a good thing. However, when we are working cross-culturally, cross-linguistically and cross-religiously to reach people groups in our city that are astronomically different than we are in our culturally contextualized version of Christianity, we may actually be creating more barriers for them to come to faith by inviting them in. Perhaps we should go, cross the cultural barriers ourselves and meet them where they are instead?

For months, this pastor had been practicing Christian hospitality with his neighbor in hopes that his neighbor might come to know Christ and become a part of his church. It had not yet crossed his mind that through his relationship with his neighbors, he might be able to reach the entire Syrian community in his city with the gospel. After our conversation that day, he determined to aspire toward reaching his Syrian neighbor and the rest of their community in a culturally appropriate way — perhaps by starting a Bible study in the home of his neighbor. This was so that his neighbor would feel comfortable inviting other Syrians from the community to come and study the Bible with them in his own home. Already, this pastor will be creating a community around the Word of God that makes sense to those who are a part of the Syrian community.



The principle here is, in essence, an attitude of going to the people group communities rather than bringing the people group to you. The question at hand is whether we want to reach the one or the whole community. Most people groups can be divided into three helpful sub-groups. Within every people group, there are those who would be considered the religious core. Practically speaking, these would most likely be the older first generation who speaks little to no English and has trouble operating within the greater Western society. These individuals are hardened in their cultural and religious traditions and will likely never be willing to receive the gospel.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, there are those who are on the fringes of the people group community. They are unique in that they are able to

operate comfortably both within their people group community and the greater Western society. They are fluent in English, affluent and open to cultural norms and messages from the Western world. Many of those who fit this bill will be younger, highly educated and are perhaps even international students. Those who are on the fringes would likely feel comfortable in an American English worship service on a Sunday morning. As you engage people group communities in your city, you will find that some from this fringe category will naturally become a part of your own local expression of the church. If they feel most comfortable there for whatever reason, that is perfectly fine. If you are able to see some from the fringes come to faith in Christ, then do what you can to encourage them to help lead you as you continue to press into the majority population and culturally religious core with the gospel.

The majority population should be our target within the people group communities in our cities. This subgroup is typically the largest in number. They range from non-English speaking to semi-bilingual and are fairly tied to the cultural and religious norms of their group. However, there are some small changes taking place within their worldview. They would not feel comfortable or be able to worship in an English-speaking, Western-style worship service. If this is our target group, then we must develop strategies other than inviting them to our worship services. We have worship services that cater to our language and cultural norms. If we love them at all, then we will want the same for them.

Ultimately, there are two important issues at hand within this discussion — discipleship and multiplication. The issue of discipleship is more important. Ask yourself if you want them to be Americanized or if you want them to be reproducing believers. I firmly believe that everyone should have the opportunity to be discipled in their own language and within their own cultural context. Second, is what we are doing something that will be reproducible and multiplicative both here and around the world? If we want to form Christians and churches who will be apt to return to their home context and reach unreached people groups there, we need to form them in an appropriately contextualized way.



A group of people are sitting in a circle on the floor, reading books. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm, yellowish light source. The people are wearing casual clothing like jeans and t-shirts. The focus is on the hands holding the books and the text on the pages. The text "START BIBLE STUDY GROUPS" is overlaid in the center in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

**START BIBLE STUDY GROUPS**

In light of our discussion thus far, I hope it is clear that all engagement is and should be geared toward starting Bible study groups within the context of the people group community in your city. Before going further, we must ask what we mean by the term Bible study? We are not necessarily talking about a typical Sunday School Bible study where you all sit around with your Bibles in a church building classroom and someone teaches. We are also not necessarily talking about a typical American small group Bible study setting where everyone goes around and shares what they think the passage means.

This kind of Bible study will likely look very different from anything you have ever seen before because it will likely be formed with people who are not yet believers. In most cases, but not always, these will need to take place in the homes of those from the people group communities in our cities. If the Bible study is not in their homes, then it at least needs to be in a place where they feel safe and would be willing to invite others from their community. Focus on individuals who are open and receptive to the gospel and have them invite their friends and family to join. But why should we use the Bible with people who are not even believers?

When Keelan was a missionary in West Africa, he worked in six or seven Susu villages that were predominately Muslim. When he went into a new village, he asked if they had ever read or heard anything from the Bible. When they said no, he would ask if they were interested in hearing the story of the Bible. They were overjoyed and asked him to begin right away. Keelan asked the individual he was speaking with to get all of his friends and family together that evening, and he would come and share a story from God's Word.

Starting with the story of creation, Keelan would work through the Scriptures, highlighting key themes like creation, fall, redemption and reconciliation. Keelan shared with me that in all six or seven villages, when he finished the Old Testament and started with the story of Christ in the New Testament, all those present would immediately want to become Christian! Why? The Old Testament points to a coming Messiah. When Jesus Christ comes on the scene, they can either accept or reject Him as the one who was promised.

We should use the Bible because many of them have never read or heard the Bible. Some will not even know that the Bible exists. How can we share with them that they must be saved if they have no concept of the fall? They have no idea from what they need to be saved. We can and should trust the Scripture to do

the work of salvation, "For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than a two edged sword, piercing to the division of the soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). If we can get these people groups in contact with the Word of God, then the Word, through the Holy Spirit, will do the work of salvation in them. But what exactly should these Bible studies look like?

When the gospel was brought to the Western world, we began to explain the gospel and read the Bible within the framework of clearly Western characteristics. As Western evangelicals, we put a lot of importance in the atonement of Christ and justification of sin because of our history, culture and individualistic worldview.

This is actually a good thing. The gospel of Christ is good news that can be applied in any culture, context, people, nation or tongue. The thing we must remember is that just because others think about things differently than we do, that does not mean that we are right and they are wrong. When an Eastern believer proclaims the gospel, they might focus instead on the reconciliation between God and man that is brought about through the work of Christ. An African believer, who has been brought up in a context of honor and shame, shares the gospel in terms of a great reversal of the curse.

As we present the gospel of Christ through the Word of God, we must tailor our methods to those with whom we are speaking. We should tailor the stories we tell, questions we raise and points we bring out to the worldviews of people groups themselves. In order to do this, we must truly know and understand their worldviews.

We may need to do the Bible study in two languages, with us speaking English and an interpreter sharing in the people group's language. We may also need to structure the Bible studies differently based on literacy level. A Bible study with a group of Burmese refugees

who cannot read at all in any language will look very different from one with a group of Turks who are all in the graduate program at the local state university. We must also and most especially consider their level of knowledge of the Scriptures. We must start where they are and patiently take them through the Scriptures, helping them to form a biblical worldview. We need to start Bible studies in their community that are centered around the grand narrative of the gospel of Christ in Scripture and that are used to evangelize lost attenders and disciple new believers.

There are many resources available to you as you begin to craft what these Bible studies need to look like. One of the best collections of these many resources can be found on the ethneCity website, which is run by Terry Sharp of the International Mission Board. It may also be beneficial for you to contact the International Mission Board and request any tools that missionaries are using among your focus people group overseas. Seeking out and connecting with missionaries from that region of the world will greatly increase the quality of the tools you can use to evangelize and disciple your focus people group here.



A photograph of two men sitting on a wooden bench in front of a brick wall. The man on the left is wearing a blue denim shirt and is smiling while looking at the man on the right. The man on the right is wearing a light blue shirt and is looking down at an open book he is holding. The text "IDENTIFY & EQUIP LEADERS" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

# IDENTIFY & EQUIP LEADERS

Robert Coleman's book *The Master Plan of Evangelism* is a tremendous resource to help you figure out how to identify and equip leaders from within the people group community. He points out that Christ decided to "devote himself primarily to a few men, rather than the masses, so that the masses could at last be saved."<sup>12</sup> Christ understood that "before the world could ever be permanently helped, people would have to be raised up who could lead the multitudes in the things of God."<sup>13</sup>

## Identify Leaders

Ultimately, "unless Jesus' converts were given competent men of God to lead them on and protect them in the truth, they would soon fall into confusion and despair, and the last state would be worse than the first."<sup>14</sup> That is why He said to Peter, "On this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). By developing a strong foundation of leaders within these new churches, Christ promises that Satan will never overthrow His Church. This foundation also ensures the growth and reproduction of like-minded leaders and consequently new, like-minded, church-planting churches.

**After looking on the crowds of people, Jesus said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into the harvest."**

**Matthew 9:37-38**

As Bible study groups grow in number and people begin to come to faith in Christ, begin to identify leaders from within the community of new believers. Don't wait until they come to faith in Christ before you begin looking for these potential laborers. They may be within the harvest.

Keep your eyes attuned to where the Lord might be working in the lives of individuals within these new Bible study groups. Focus on a few good men who are filled with the Spirit and are willing to learn. Share your life with them as they are molded into men who will lead these new expressions of God's Church in your city. As you prayerfully watch those in your Bible study groups, consider what the Scriptures say about what the leadership of the Church should look like. Look to the passages on elders and deacons for guidance (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-16). Select and pour your life into men who are above reproach, self-controlled, respected from outside and within, hospitable, able to teach and

humble enough to learn, gentle in spirit and not lovers of money (1 Timothy 3:1-7).

Choose men who are filled with a humble spirit, have servant's hearts toward others in the group, and lead their households well. Spend time investing in men who are full of faith, obedient to share the gospel and actively seek out those who have not yet heard. Finally, Paul warns Timothy not to elect pastors who are recent converts because they may become conceited with pride (1 Timothy 3:6).

The process of identifying and equipping pastors should be slow and deliberate. To be able to identify men who have the qualities listed above, you will have to be intricately involved in the lives of these people. How do you know whether or not a man manages his household well? You must be in his home with him and his family on a regular basis. How do you know if he is faithful to share the gospel and bring others to faith in Christ? You must be with him enough to see him doing this in his daily life. How can you know if he is a lover of money? You must spend time with him, observing him, seeing how he stewards what God has given him. Is he generous? Is he teachable? Is he able to teach? Is he humble? You will only be able to observe these things if you are around these potential leaders.

## Equip Leaders

Now that you have started identifying potential leaders from the believers in these new Bible study groups, how do you go about equipping them to become the future leaders of new people group churches? Christ commands us to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). In order to equip them to be disciples and eventually disciple-makers, we must teach them to observe all that Christ has commanded us. Coleman shares Jesus' disciple-making model in *The Master Plan of Evangelism*.

Jesus selected men who were willing to learn. He chose men who were unimpressive by the world's standards

and had little formal education beyond their trade. Instead, Jesus selected men who were willing to be used and were “pliable in the hands of the Master.”<sup>15</sup>

Jesus associated with the men He selected and made it His practice to be with His 12 disciples. Of the 12, Jesus devoted a significant amount of time more closely associating with three — Peter, James and John. Without neglecting the masses, Christ spent a lot of time with His disciples. They were always with Him. Jesus devoted “Himself primarily to the task of developing some leaders who in turn could give this kind of personal attention to others.”<sup>16</sup> The men who followed Jesus so closely eventually formed the Church and ministered to others in the same way Jesus ministered to them. In the book of Acts, Luke notes that those in the newly established Church were with one another “day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes” (Acts 2:42-47). We must develop leaders among people groups by being with them and sharing our lives with them so that they might see the gospel in both word and deed.

Christ also required obedience from His followers. Following Christ involved a “surrender one’s whole life to the Master in absolute submission to His sovereignty.”<sup>17</sup> We see this demonstrated by Christ. Coleman points out that “absolute obedience to the will of God, of course, was the controlling principle of the Master’s own life. In His human nature He continually gave consent to the will of His Father, which made it possible for God to use His life fully according to its intended purposes.”<sup>18</sup> Until we are willing to follow Christ’s leadership, then we will never be leaders ourselves. We must show these leaders-in-training what absolute submission to the will of the Father is through both the Scriptures and our own lives.

Christ did not beg these people to stay with Him. Instead, He challenged them to take up their crosses and follow Him. He warned them that their love for Him should be so great that their closest relationships in life would look like hatred by comparison (Luke 14:25-33). His followers were required to renounce all that they had to follow Him. Those who looked back were not worthy of His Kingdom. He encouraged them to count the cost of following Him from the beginning because He knew that persecution would come (Matthew 10:16-25).

As we share the truth of the gospel with those in these people group communities, they need to count the cost, take up their crosses, and follow Christ through it all. Christ requires obedience of His followers. He said, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (John 14:15). This is done by the power of the Holy Spirit that

He Himself sent to dwell within us. We must first be obedient to Christ, and then call others to do the same.

Our Lord promised One who would come to us as a Helper. One of the most important questions that must be fully affirmed in the lives of these leaders-in-training has to do with the Holy Spirit. It is by the Holy Spirit that we are both “made clean through the Word and set apart unto God for holy service.”<sup>19</sup> Are these brothers filled with the Spirit of God? Are they walking by the Spirit? Do you see the fruit of the Spirit in their lives? In order for these men to be leaders of these new churches, you must be able to see how they are laying aside and turning from sin to good works of the Spirit.

Throughout His ministry, Jesus demonstrated how His disciples ought to live by the way in which He lived (John 13:15). He modeled for them how to pray to their Father (Luke 11:1-4; Matthew 6:9-13). He taught them how to interpret the things concerning Himself from the Scriptures (Luke 24:13-35). He demonstrated what it looked like to share the gospel, guide lost men to salvation and teach them the things of the Kingdom of God. He showed them how to preach the gospel both to individuals and the masses. We must do the same with these potential leaders.

Once Christ had shown them how, He assigned them to do the same things that He had been doing. With brief instructions, He delegated the work of the Kingdom to them, expecting them to follow in the way He had shown them. Coleman helps us to see that “Christian disciples are sent men and women — sent out in the same work of world evangelism to which the Lord was sent and for which He gave His life. Evangelism is not an optional accessory to our life. It is the heartbeat of all that we are called to be and do.”<sup>20</sup> He warned His followers of the hardship that would come but assured them that He would always be with them, even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20). As time goes on and you teach these people how to study and teach the Bible, let them teach more and more while you teach less and less. As time goes on and you have modeled what sharing the gospel looks like, allow these new leaders to share the gospel instead of you sharing it.

After Christ had delegated the work of the Kingdom to His followers, He supervised them in their work. He did this through continually reviewing the same teachings over and again. He also helped them to see how they might apply what He was teaching them better. After the 77 returned, rejoicing over their power to cast out demons, He reminded them that they should instead rejoice that they were sons and daughters of the King

(Luke 10:17-20). Jesus did not expect more from His disciples than they could do, but He patiently kept them moving toward the goal. He provided accountability by continually checking in with them to see if they had done as He requested. We must do this same thing, and in the same way Christ did. Sometimes, accountability can create discouragement. When Christ provided accountability, it encouraged His disciples to press onward. We must do as He did in this.

Finally, Christ expected His disciples to be about reproducing themselves. The test of Christ's ministry with these men was whether or not they would be disciples who would make disciples. We see through the Great Commission that Christ expected His disciples to disciple all nations.

Prior to His ascension, Christ speaks to His disciples about the Kingdom and His promised Helper — the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:3, 7-9). Once His disciples were filled with the Spirit, the gospel went to Jerusalem, where about 3,000 were added to their number at Pentecost (Acts 2:41). But the Church remained there in Jerusalem. After the persecution of Stephen, we see the Church — all but the apostles — scattered throughout Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1-2). The Samaritan church was established through the preaching of a disciple named Philip (Acts 9:31). During a subsequent period of peace, the Church grew in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, but the disciples had not yet taken the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Through a vision, God caused the apostle Peter to take the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10:1-11:18). After that — through the preaching of “some men” — the diverse church at Antioch is born. This would become the church that sent out Barnabas and Paul as missionaries throughout the whole Greco-Roman world (Acts 13:1-3). After many missionary journeys, Acts finishes with Paul in Rome, “proclaiming the Kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance” (Acts 28:30-31). As disciples of Christ, we carry on this same work of seeing our Lord's Kingdom come on earth.

As you proceed in identifying and equipping leaders, consider the following questions. What would you do if these leaders have a slightly different theology than

you? What if they want to “do church” differently than you? Just because something is different does not mean it is wrong. We are not creating carbon copies of ourselves, though we should live as an example. We must teach them to live and lead in the image of Christ.

How can you identify and equip leaders without supporting them financially? By financially supporting these new church leaders, we are teaching them that leadership positions in the church must be professionalized. If leadership positions are professional and require wages, we bottleneck leadership development. If wages are required to be a church leader, then there will be few church leaders.

Should we seek out churches, pastors and church planters from near-culture people groups? Yes, and it is incredibly important to do so. However, do not simply pay the “professional experts” to come in and reach these people group communities around you. We already have a tendency to outsource the work of missions to professional missionaries or church planters. We don't want to accentuate that even further. If we are not careful, we will outsource the work of reaching people group communities in our cities to the near-culture pastor, as well. By doing this, we are robbing our members of the opportunity to serve God in His mission through their own church. Instead, partner with near-culture churches. Pray and work alongside them. Plant churches among unreached and unengaged people group communities in your cities together.

We hope that once you have spent a significant amount of time training and equipping potential leaders, the community of believers in Bible study groups will recognize them as their leaders. The new leaders should naturally take on more and more responsibility within the community. Eventually, the new congregation of believers must formally recognize the new leaders as their elders and pastors. Once leaders have been trained and equipped to be elders and pastors of the growing community of believers, set apart the new community of believers as a church.

A photograph of two women sitting at a wooden table by a large window. The woman on the left is wearing a green floral patterned dress and is looking towards the right. The woman on the right is wearing a light-colored t-shirt and dark pants, with her back to the camera. The window looks out onto a lush green forest. There are some decorative elements on the window, including a large, stylized 'X' or 'M' shape. The text 'MULTIPLY CHURCHES' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

# MULTIPLY CHURCHES

Let's define what we mean by church. Church is not a building or a Sunday morning activity. It is a local community of regenerate believers who submit themselves to the authority of the lordship of Christ Jesus and His Word, practice the ordinances of believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper and fulfill the Great Commission by making disciples of the nations. Hopefully, new churches would be established around leaders you have trained, and hopefully, these leaders are already reproducing themselves, which will lead the new churches multiplying as well.

Developing leaders to establish multiplying churches is a tough thing to do, and it comes with all sorts of questions. Such work has only been done in a few places in North America among diaspora people groups. However, it has been done repeatedly by missionaries all around the world.

In many places around the world, a church planter or missionary plants churches that he never intends to pastor himself.<sup>21</sup> He does this by planting a church and raising up leadership for that church from within community of new believers the way that the apostle Paul did in the book of Acts (Acts 20:17-38). Paul would go into a new city preaching the gospel by the power of the Spirit, see people come to faith, form a church and help them to establish elders and pastors over that church. There are, of course, other church-planting methodologies that you could choose to follow as well. Whichever methodology you choose, be sure that it is easily reproducible and emphasizes multiplication so that it does not bottleneck because of lack of new leadership.

By the time your church gets to this point, you should have good relationships built with missionaries on the field working among your focus people group.

You will most likely be experts on your focus people group, and you should be well-equipped to answer the tough questions that will arise as you establish these new, autonomous people group churches. James E. Plueddemann's book *Leading Across Cultures* may be a helpful resource as you work through this process.

The final step in the process is to invite these new, autonomous people group churches to partner with your church as a sister church to continue planting churches. We hope that because of the way we have disciplined and been on mission with these believers all along, they will be willing to partner with us to continue planting churches among their own people group and other people groups. We hope they are willing to work with us as we continue to send missionaries and short-term teams to reach their people group in their homeland with the gospel of Christ.

Our hope is that these new people group churches in your city will be willing to, as your church did, look around them and begin taking the gospel across cultural boundaries to reach other people group communities in their city. The hope is to see a church-planting movement spread in your city, throughout North America, and even to the other side of the globe.

# END NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Craig Van Gelder and Dwight J. Zscheile, "Missional Engagement with Culture in a Globalized World," in *The Missional Church in Perspective: Mapping Trends and Shaping the Conversation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 129.

<sup>2</sup> Tim Chester and Steve Timmis, *Total Church: a Radical Reshaping Around Gospel and Community* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 33.

<sup>3</sup> Chester and Timmis, *Total Church*, 88.

<sup>4</sup> Discovery and Engagement graphic from C. Keelan Cook, Peoples Next Door Project and Urban Resource Initiative through the Center for Great Commission Studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

<sup>5</sup> People Groups (IMB/CPPI: April 7, 2015) Accessed April 7, 2015. <http://peoplegroups.org/Understand.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> The language of "carefully examine, naturally encounter, and intentionally engage" originated from colleagues with the International Mission Board — Bryan Galloway (Senior Research Analyst for peoplegroups.info) and Terry Sharp (Director/Lead Strategist State and Association Relations & Urban Mobilization Strategies).

<sup>7</sup> A people group that is considered unreached is less than 2 percent evangelical. A people group that is considered unengaged means that there has been no evangelical gospel work going on among them for the past two years.

<sup>8</sup> Freedom index, physical excursion level and threat level are a few things to keep in mind when prioritizing which people groups to engage in a North American context.

<sup>9</sup> As an example, consider ISIS-controlled Syria and Iraq.

<sup>10</sup> Chester and Timmis, *Total Church*, 63.

<sup>11</sup> Chester and Timmis, *Total Church*, 63.

<sup>12</sup> Robert E. Colman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 31.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 31

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

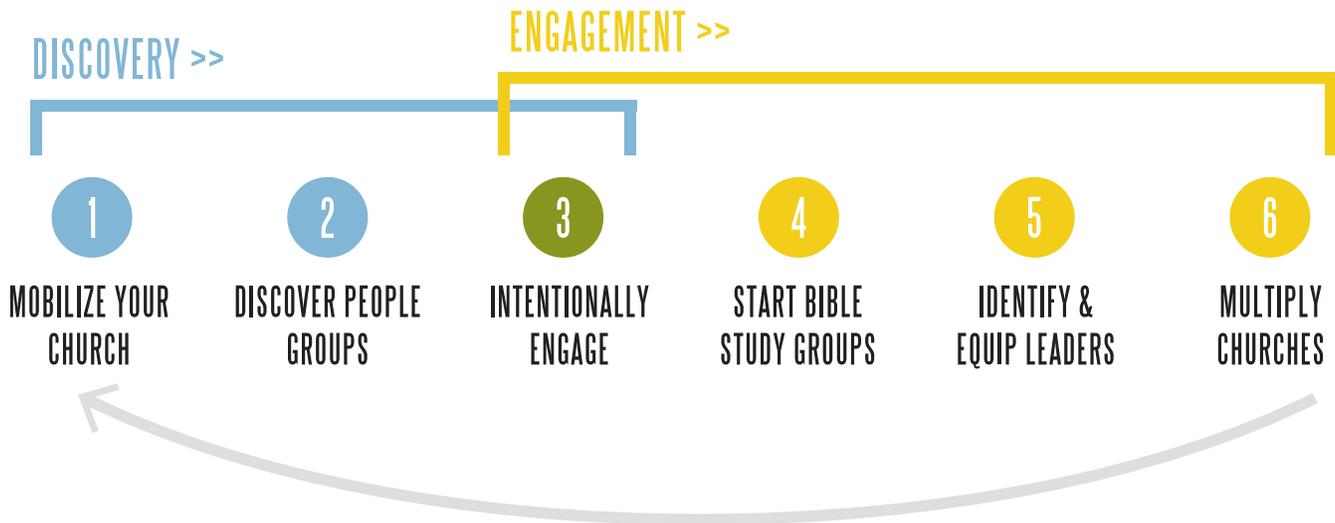
<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>21</sup> The missiological term for this method of church planting is called apostolic church planting. Within this method, the planter(s) never intends to pastor the church he is planting but raises up indigenous leadership from within the new community of believers to pastor this newly established church.

# HELPFUL RESOURCES

# DISCOVERY AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



- The general strategy we would like to put forward begins with **(1) mobilizing your church** to **(2) discover people groups** in your city by carefully examining your neighborhoods and naturally encountering people group communities in your day-to-day activities.
- Once people groups have been discovered, then you must **(3) intentionally engage** them by maintaining a consistent presence in the people group community and continual proclamation of the gospel.
- This is done with the hope that it will open the door to **(4) start Bible study groups** in their communities.
- As the Bible study groups grow, you must **(5) identify** and **equip leaders** from within the group.
- The process will be complete when you **(6) multiply churches** among the people group populations in your city that multiply regionally and around the world. The new people group churches will then be invited to partner as sister churches with the engaging church, and the cycle continues.

# SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR DISCOVERY

## Ground Rules

Be a learner. Be interested in who they are as a person. Remember, they are people. Look for ways to build context for friendship from the moment you walk in the door of their establishment (each point of interest). Remember, the goal is to strike up natural conversations with internationals that will both collect information and build relationships. This list of questions is not exhaustive. This is not a script, so don't use it as such. Instead, use the questions as guidelines for cross-cultural conversations at points of interest. Stray from this often and make your questions natural. You are trying to better understand the ethnic makeup of your city so that you and your church might better love your neighbor (Mark 12 & Luke 10). That's them.

## Introductions

- Hello! How are you? Listen to their response.
- My name is \_\_\_\_\_. What is your name? Remember their name. If you have trouble with understanding names, ask them to spell it.

## To help you answer the question, "Where are they from?"

- Where is your food (all your trinkets, fabric, rugs, etc.) from? Are you also from there? Yes: That is so interesting. Tell me about it. No: Well, where are you from? Tell me about it. Do what you can to drill down to their nationality and primary language.
- Do you have a family? Where are they? In the United States or back home? Where is your home country?
- How long have you been in the United States?
- What languages do you speak? Will you teach me how to say something kind to you in your own language? If you need to, write it down or have them write it down for you.

## To help you answer the question, "Where are they now?"

- Where do you live in the area? Do you walk to work? How long does it take you to get to work?
- Are there many people from your country who live in the area? How many? Where do they live? Are they clustered (where?) or spread out (where?)
- Where do you and your friends hang out/socialize? Bar? Club? Coffee shop? Park?
- Are there any festivals in the year that you celebrate? Are they big? How many people? When is it? Where will it be? Could we come?
- What is your faith? What religion are you?
- Where do you worship? This can eventually lead you to an opportunity to share your testimony and the gospel, but be sure to listen to them first.

## To help you answer the question, "Do you know any persons of influence?"

- Are there any leaders of your community here in the city?
- Is there an association for your country here in the city? Is there a president of that association?
- Would you mind introducing me to him or her?

# PRACTICAL HANDLES FOR ENGAGEMENT

## 1. Be regular.

- a. Become regulars at ethnic restaurants.
- b. Become a regular at people group run nail salons, ethnic hair salons, or eyebrow threading shops.
- c. Buy some of your groceries at an ethnic grocery store each week.
- d. Use people group car dealerships, realtors, plumbers, electricians, car repairmen, photographers, bakers, caterers, doctors, nannies, etc.
- e. Engage with them in a hobby or activity that they enjoy.
- f. Attend rites of passage and cultural events (weddings, funerals, baby dedications, etc.).
- g. If you learn of a business in town where many of a people group are working, consider moving your employment there to be among them more.
- h. Consider moving into an apartment complex or neighborhood where there are many of them.
- i. Consider inviting someone to move into your home with your family. This is especially helpful with international students.

## 2. Expand your learning.

- a. Observe cultural patterns, behavior and thinking.
- b. Ask them about their history, government, economy and worldview. When asking about their story, tell stories from God's Word.
- c. Ask them to teach you some of their language.
- d. Ask them to teach you how to cook their food.
- e. Ask them to teach you about the sports that they keep up with or play.
- f. Go to their worship centers (mosques, temples, etc.) and ask to learn about their religious views.
- g. Read about honor/shame, fear/power, etc., worldviews that may apply to your people group.
- h. Read about news from their countries of origin. Embrace their history.
- i. Learn culturally sensitive, yet effective evangelism methodologies from the missionaries that serve among similar peoples. Use these methods among people group populations in your own city.

## 3. Serve them in humility, avoiding paternalism.

- a. Invite them into your home. Marry the Great Commission and the great commandments — gospel hospitality.
- b. Provide Bibles, tracts, etc., in their language for those who are literate.
- c. Offer to teach English as a second language (in their homes and from the Bible).
- d. Offer tutoring for students or children (in their homes or work place).
- e. Offer citizenship classes, give them a driver's manual, or teach them how to drive.
- f. Ask what they desire for their future, and then work with them to reach their goals.
- g. Ask what they see are needs in their community, and then work with them to meet those needs.

## 4. Focus on relationships

- a. Remember, they are people, not a project or program. Treat them as such. Genuinely love your neighbor as yourself.
- b. Everything you do among the people should move toward a Bible study.

# WEBSITES FOR DISCOVERY & ENGAGEMENT

## **PeopleGroups.info Initiative | *peoplegroups.info***

As a joint venture to bring mapping data together for the entire United States, both the North American Mission Board and the International Mission Board have partnered to provide *peoplegroups.info* as a resource to churches in North America. The information in this website is growing every day as a centralized place to house information about people group communities across North America. The senior data analyst for this initiative is Bryan Galloway with the International Mission Board.

As you discover people group populations in your city, add people groups and points of interests to *peoplegroups.info*.

## **PeopleGroups.org**

This website is one of the most up-to-date databases of over 1,100 people groups worldwide. It allows you to explore people groups around the world via an interactive map, understand people groups by reading their people group profiles and develop connections to engage some of the people groups around the world.

## **EthneCITY | *ethnecity.com***

Terry Sharp of the International Mission Board hosts this collaborative conversation website to provide tools for evangelism and discipleship among people groups from all around the world. The site includes scriptural resources in other languages, cross-cultural evangelism resources, helpful books, apps, videos and audio. The site also includes helpful resources to begin Bible studies among internationals in your city.

# SIX FOUNDATIONAL BOOKS FOR DISCOVERY & ENGAGEMENT

## ***Strangers Next Door: Immigration, Migration and Mission* | J.D. Payne**

In his book, J.D. Payne helps to paint the picture for our shrinking, globalizing and urbanizing world. He presents an honest look at the diversification that is going on in our North American cities and then calls the Church to take responsibility for reaching the people group communities who are becoming our next-door neighbors.

## ***Being the Church in a Multi-Ethnic Community: Why It Matters and How it Works***

**Gary L. McIntosh and Alan McMahan**

This book examines the changing nature of our world and the opportunity that the massive influx of immigrants from all around the world brings to Western Christians. McIntosh and McMahan discuss multi- and mono-ethnic church planting and explore which types are faithful to Scripture and how to decide which model to use. Readers come away with a good grasp of basic principles for engaging ethnic groups in their communities.

## ***Church Planting Among Immigrants in U.S. Urban Centers* | Enoch Wan**

Wan provides a strategic and methodological framework for churches and Great Commission Christians who are interested in being missionaries among their immigrant neighbors. Wan gives a framework and offers practical steps for finding where immigrants are, how to reach them and why it is important. This book is great tool for engaging people group populations in your city.

## ***The Master Plan of Evangelism* | Robert E. Coleman**

Coleman's work is regarded as one of the most important books ever written on discipleship. Coleman examines how Jesus made disciples and challenges readers to make disciples using eight steps: selection, association, consecration, impartation, demonstration, delegation, supervision and reproduction. This book is very helpful for disciple-making.

## ***Total Church: A Radical Reshaping Around the Gospel and Community***

**Tim Chester and Steve Timmis**

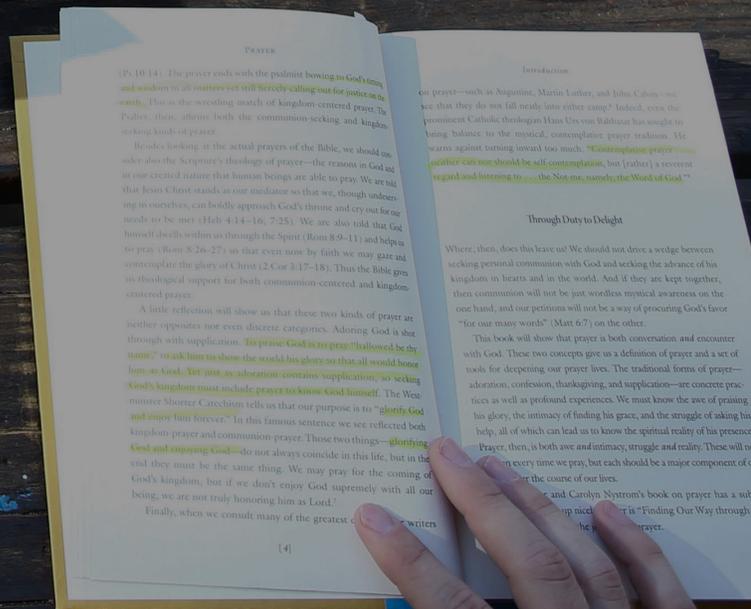
Chester and Timmis offer a biblical understanding of the gospel and community, and make applications of these two subjects to evangelism, social involvement, church planting, world mission, discipleship, pastoral care, spirituality, theology, apologetics and young people.

## ***Tradecraft: For the Church On Mission* | Larry E. McCrary, et al.**

This is a resource that is written by missionaries and for the church. The primary purpose of the book is to help the ordinary church member be equipped in practical skills that every missionary uses on the field.

# WHEN SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH OTHER FAITHS

- 1. *How to Share Christ With Your Friends of Another Faith* | Dr. Jeff Brawner**
- 2. Sharing with Buddhists:**  
*Sharing Jesus Effectively in the Buddhist World* | David Lim  
*The Lotus and the Cross: Jesus Talks with Buddha* | Ravi Zacharias
- 3. Sharing with Folk or Traditionally Animistic Faiths:**  
*Understanding Folk Religion: A Christian Response to Popular Beliefs and Practices* | Paul G. Hiebert  
*Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts* | Gailyn Van Rheenen
- 4. Sharing with Hindus:**  
*Engaging With Hindus: Understanding Their World, Sharing Good News* | Robin Thomson  
*New Birth or Rebirth? Jesus Talks With Krishna* | Ravi Zacharias  
*Jesus Among Other Gods: The Absolute Claims of the Christian Message* | Ravi Zacharias
- 5. Sharing with Muslims:**  
*Engaging with Muslims: Understanding Their World, Sharing Good News.* | John Klaassen  
*Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus* | Nabeel Qureshi
- 6. Sharing with Sikhs:**  
*Lions, Princesses, Gurus: Reaching Your Sikh Neighbour* | Ram Gidoomal & Margaret Wardell



PRAYER

Ps. 10:14) The prayer ends with the psalmist bowing to God's throne and resolution in an unswerving will fervently calling out for justice on the earth. This is the swirling march of kingdom-centered prayer. The Psalter, then, allows both the communion-seeking and kingdom-seeking kinds of prayer.

Besides looking at the actual prayers of the Bible, we should consider also the Scripture's theology of prayer—the reasons in God and in our created nature that human beings are able to pray. We are told that Jesus Christ stands as our mediator so that we, though undeserving in ourselves, can boldly approach God's throne and cry out for our needs to be met (Heb 4:14–16; 7:25). We are also told that God himself dwells within us through the Spirit (Rom 8:9–11) and helps us to pray (Rom 8:26–27) so that even now by faith we may gaze and contemplate the glory of Christ (2 Cor 3:17–18). Thus the Bible gives us theological support for both communion-centered and kingdom-centered prayer.

A little reflection will show us that these two kinds of prayer are neither opposites nor even discrete categories. Adoring God is done through both supplication. **Impassioned prayer is prayer "inflamed by the name" to ask him to show the world his glory so that all would honor him as God. Yet just as adoration contains supplication, so seeking God's kingdom must include prayer to know God himself.** The Westminster Shorter Catechism tells us that our purpose is to "glorify God and enjoy him forever." In this famous sentence we see reflected both kingdom prayer and communion prayer. Those two things—**glorifying God and enjoying God**—do not always coincide in this life, but in the end they must be the same thing. We may pray for the coming of God's kingdom, but if we don't enjoy God supremely with all our being, we are not truly honoring him as Lord.

Finally, when we consult many of the greatest Christian writers

Introduction

even prayer—such as Augustine, Martin Luther, and John Calvin—see that they do not fall neatly into either camp? Indeed, even the prominent Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar has sought to bring balance to the mystical, contemplative prayer tradition. He warns against turning inward too much. **"Contemplative prayer must neither be self-contemplation, but [rather] a reverent regard and listening to—the Not-me, namely, the Word of God."**

#### Through Duty to Delight

Where, then, does this leave us? We should not drive a wedge between seeking personal communion with God and seeking the advance of his kingdom in hearts and in the world. And if they are kept together, then communion will not be just wordless mystical awareness on the one hand, and our petitions will not be a way of procuring God's favor "for our many words" (Matt 6:7) on the other.

This book will show that prayer is both conversation and encounter with God. These two concepts give us a definition of prayer and a set of tools for deepening our prayer lives. The traditional forms of prayer—adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication—are concrete practices as well as profound experiences. We must know the awe of praising his glory, the intimacy of finding his grace, and the struggle of asking his help, all of which can lead us to know the spiritual reality of his presence. Prayer, then, is both awe and intimacy, struggle and reality. These will not be the same in every time we pray, but each should be a major component of our lives.

and Carolyn Nystrom's book on prayer has a subtitle "Prayer: Finding Our Way through the Wilderness of Prayer."





## North Carolina Baptists

Baptist State Convention of North Carolina • Milton A. Hollifield Jr., *Executive Director-Treasurer*  
205 Convention Drive • Cary, NC 27511 • (919) 467-5100 • (800) 395-5102 • [www.ncbaptist.org](http://www.ncbaptist.org)

The missions and ministries of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina are made possible  
by your gifts through the Cooperative Program and the North Carolina Missions Offering.