

The Need to ReThink

RETHINKING THE CHURCH - TO REBUILD THE COMMUNITY

The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn. – Alvin Toffler

When bringing about change in the way people behave, we often need to start with questions of “why” before considering the practical issues of “how.”

This brings us to the vital question of why the church exists.

In answering this question, we are confronted with the understanding that the church exists because of the mission Christ has with the world.

The church does not have a mission, but the mission has a church – David Bosch

The church is the agency through which the mission will be accomplished.

This implicates on recognizing three vital missional agencies:

Raising Missional Individuals,

Being a Missional Community

Engaging in a Missional Ecosystem.



The functioning of every organization, including the church, is built upon underlying paradigms or assumptions. The paradigms determine how an organization thinks and, therefore acts. It seems that the strategies that are prevalent in the church today, seem to no longer reflect a passion for mission. What we need now is a new mindset and a new set of tools. We need a new vision of reality, a new paradigm—a fundamental change in our thinking that leads to a fundamental change in our behavior, especially as it relates to our understanding of the church, discipleship, leadership and mission.

Here are nine areas in which **RETHINKING** of the church and its mission needs paradigm shifts:

1	ReThink the Why	From Church Growth to the Church on Mission (Why Church?)
2	ReThink the Nature of the Church	From a Church Served to a Church Sent (Mission)
3	ReThink the Gospel	From Two Chapter to Four Chapter (creation/fall/redemption/restoration)
4	ReThink the congregation	From encouraging to equipping (people are the program)
5	ReThink Discipleship	From Random Investment to Intentional Outcomes (knowing God/loving people/impacting your world)
6	ReThink Vocation	From Secular Vocations to Sacred Callings (no secular / sacred divide – only darkness / light divide)
7	ReThink Scorecards	From Church Activities to Kingdom Impact (Faith / Love / Hope)
8	ReThink Culture	From Place of Privilege to Posture of a Servant (Not triumphalism / control)
9	ReThink Relationships	From Ego focus to Kingdom Ecosystem functioning (unity for mission)

REBUILDING THE COMMUNITY. When God entered into our world in and through the person of Jesus, He came to live among us.

John 1:14 The Message
“The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood”.

If God’s central way of reaching His world was to incarnate Himself in Jesus, then our way of reaching the world should likewise be incarnational.

There are two very important ideas related to incarnational mission: proximity and presence.

PROXIMITY – we do not minister to the community – but as part of the community. Incarnational.

**We can understand PRESENCE in three dimensions:
Fathering / Faithful / Fruitful**

FATHERING presence | The HEART of Christ to the world.

This is a burdened heart. The awareness of the need in the world. A beautiful example from the Bible we find in the book Nehemiah. It's the story of the building of the walls of Jerusalem towards the end of the Babylonian exile. There are so many parallels with that story and the church in modern society and how to be present in the world as the church of Christ.

Neh 1:2b-4 I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped, who had survived the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said to me, "The survivors who are left from the captivity in the province are there in great distress and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem is also broken down, and its gates are burned with fire." So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

FAITHFUL presence | The CHARACTER of Christ in the world.

Before we rush out to DO, we should start by focusing on how to BE. Being an "incarnational church" means we have a grasp on who Christ is and who we are in Him, and how that translates to my everyday life. This affects how I relate and treat my fellow believer and lost neighbor? In knowing this, we as the church are the people of God living out this new life just as Jesus, who dwelled and moved among us did. We are called to spread the aroma of Christ in the world. This happens as we choose to exhibit Kingdom principles - not as a program - but as a transformed life. People see the church by how they see Christians in action. How they see God is how He is displayed and deployed in the life of believers.

2Cor 2:14-16 Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

FRUITFUL presence | The ACTIONS of Christ in the world.

Taking Faith, Love and Hope to our world. As representative of God's kingdom, we need to engage society in a way that God's glory would become evident in every aspect of life. We can't be a "come and see" organization; we have to be a movement that "goes and does". We are called to rebuild the 'walls' of our Cities. Nehemiah is the account of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, being is a symbol of the city of God, God's dwelling place and the center of life for the world. In an individual life, then, the rebuilding of the walls would be a picture of re-establishing the strength of that life.

This is the picture of the way the walls of any life, of any local church, of any community, of any city or nation, can be rebuilt into strength and power and purpose again.

Nehemiah defied the opposition of Judah's enemies on all sides - Samaritans, Ammonites, Arabs and Philistines - and rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem within 52 days.

Neh 6:15 So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days.

Your mandate is to **rethink** the church in order to rebuild the city.

May you live with the same intentionality and urgency in your heart that Nehemiah had when he rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem.

**GOD BLESS YOU
IN THE MISSION!**