



# Session #1: Introduction

## Agenda, Discussion and Homework (Allow approximately one hour)

**Goal: To create space for God together, to listen to the Spirit's leading through teaching, reflection and sharing with one another, and to act on what we hear wabout growing a Christ-centered flourishing church.**

### 1. Prepare (5 minutes)

- Have each person offer a one-word check-in. (Think of one word that honestly describes how you feel right now. This is a way of connecting with each other and offering yourself to God.)
- Enter into a brief time of silence in order to still hearts, clear minds, and become attentive. Silence is a way of waiting, watching, and listening for the presence of God's Spirit in your midst. Meditate on Scripture:

*Acts 2:42-27 (NIV)*

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

### 2. Listen (15 minute video) – Flourishing Church

### 3. Reflect on what we heard (3 minutes)

Reflect silently for a few moments on the key points of the video:

- Flourishing Churches are led by flourishing leaders who are themselves flourishing disciples.
- Flourishing disciples make flourishing leaders that grow flourishing churches.

Reflect silently on these questions:

- A. How would you describe a flourishing church?
- B. Name one way in which you would say your church is flourishing.

#### 4. Share what we heard (30 minutes)

Break into small groups of 3 people for discussion around the following questions: (15 minutes)

- A. How would you describe a flourishing church? List the qualities of a flourishing church.
- B. Name one way in which you would say your church is flourishing.
- C. Come back together as a large group (15 minutes) and do the following:

Have a representative from each group share.

- The first time around, share the qualities of a flourishing church.
- The second time around, share where you see your particular church flourishing. (Record the group's observations on a whiteboard or paper for future reference\*.)

\*You will have more opportunities to discern where God wants you to grow during the next five sessions.

#### 5. Decide to commit to the Becoming the Flourishing Church process. (3 minutes)

Suggested motion: "We the Session of \_\_\_\_\_(church name)\_\_\_\_\_ commit to complete the "Becoming a Flourishing Church" process with the following agreements:

- Be present for all six sessions.
- Be open to the moving of the Holy Spirit in new ways.
- Listen well and respectfully to one another.
- Come prepared to each session with your homework assignments completed.

#### 6. Pray together and commit your action steps to the Lord. (5 minutes)

- Thank God for the ways in which your church is flourishing
- Pray for the areas in which your church is struggling

# Homework Assignment Session #1



To be completed by next session on \_\_\_\_\_(date)  
Bring this completed worksheet to your next session.

## Where do I need to grow as a disciple of Jesus? Discerning through reflection and prayer

- 1. Gratitude:** reflect on what you are thankful to God for
- 2. Invitation** for God to search me:

### **Meditate:**

*Psalm 139:23-24 (ESV)*

*Search me, O God, and know my heart; test my thoughts.  
Point out anything you find in me that makes you sad,  
and lead me along the path of everlasting life.*

**Pray** - God, show me what you want me to see as I examine my life as your follower...

### **3. Questions:**

- Where/how might I be struggling or experiencing frustration?
- Where have I been stuck/plateaued in my growth toward the likeness of Christ?
- If I were to sit down with a trusted friend and ask them, "What are my blind spots? What are my weaknesses as a disciple?", what would they say to me? (Examples: growing in my prayer life, being able to forgive, increasing my Biblical knowledge)

- 4. Talk with Jesus:** Offer to Jesus what you have discovered above (i.e. confession, seeking forgiveness, seeking counsel, giving thanks)

- 5. Pulling it all together:** Lord, what are you saying to me? What growth area are you showing me for my discipleship?

- 6. Focusing:** What one area would you like me to give my focused attention to in the next few months? What specifically would you like to be different in me after those 2-4 months?

**NOTE:** For further exploration of your health as a disciple, you may choose to take a Discipleship 360 Assessment by going to [www.flourishmovement.org](http://www.flourishmovement.org) and clicking on "Discipleship 360 Assessment". The link will allow you to invite 3-6 people to answer questions about you as a disciple and allow you to see your results.



## Discovering your APEST Typology

Look at the following definitions of APEST ministry roles that are articulated in Ephesians 4. As you read through the descriptions, rank each role 1 through 5. Use number 1 for the area most like you and use number 5 for the role that is least like you.

If you want to investigate your gifting further, you may take a 360 degree APEST assessment. You can purchase a validated version at [www.APEST.org](http://www.APEST.org).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Apostolic** – I like to start and lead new projects or ministries. I like to look at the big picture of an organization or church and think about the underlying systems and values. I like to develop new leaders to do ministry or initiate projects that I personally may not be suited for. I like to be future focused and imagine big possibilities. I may unintentionally leave people behind or wound people in my apostolic role.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Prophetic** – I often bring people back to the ultimate purpose of God and our organization or church. I have a heart and passion for the poor, oppressed, and those that are overlooked. I am not happy with the status quo and simply meeting the needs of congregation members. I want to bring God's grace and mercy to those outside of the church in tangible ways. Sometimes my passion for those outside the church can rub people the wrong way.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Evangelistic** – I like to be enthusiastic and tell people about things I believe in. I like to recruit people to a common purpose. I desperately want those around me both inside and outside the church to know the love of Jesus. I also want those inside the church to know that their identity and security is in Christ. Because of my enthusiasm I can sometimes be seen as pushy or overly optimistic.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Shepherd** – I care deeply for people. I take the hurting of other people seriously and their concerns are on my mind frequently. I sometimes can care for people so much that I can absorb their pain deeply. I love to be with people one-on-one and develop long-term relationships to help them grow toward maturity in Christ. Sometimes, because of my caring nature, I can be trampled by others or even taken advantage of.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Teacher** – I like to understand and grow in deep knowledge of concepts. I like to explain concepts and deeper biblical truths to other people. I am energized when people understand concepts for themselves and find ways to apply those concepts and insights to different facets of their life. Sometimes I can get too caught up in irrelevant details or talk over the heads of people.