



Session #5: Flourishing as a Church

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 about growing a Christ-centered flourishing church.

1. Prepare (3 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:

Ephesians 4:11-16 (Adapted from the ESV)

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

2. Listen (25 minute video) - Becoming a Flourishing Church

3. Reflect on what we heard (10 minutes)

Each person take the Healthy Church Competency Survey on page 30.

4. Share what we heard (25 minutes)

Break into small groups of 3 people for discussion around the following questions based on your answers from the test: (15 mins)

- A. Share what you see as the main strength of your church and why.
- B. Share what you see as the main growth area for your church and why.
- C. (next page)

C. After sharing & discussion, what level of consensus can you come to about your church's top strengths and growth areas?

Come back together as a large group and have one spokesperson share your answer to Letter C. (10 minutes)



Facilitator note: It might be helpful to capture these responses on a white board or an flipchart.

5. Decide together how we will act differently based on what we heard. (10 minutes)

- You will do this together in Session #6 after the Church Health Survey results have been compiled and tabulated.
- Please turn in your Church Health Survey to the facilitator.
- Assign homework: continue to work daily on your Discipleship Design this month.

6. Pray together and commit your action step to the Lord. (2 minutes)

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



Facilitator note: Use the Excel spreadsheet after this session to compile your results found on the e-course in Session Five.

Healthy Church Competency Descriptions

There are many wonderful instruments that are useful in considering how well a church is flourishing. For our purposes, we are going to adapt the “6 Movement Competencies” or qualities that have been identified by the 100 Movement (100M) Initiative. These movement competencies were originally identified in Alan Hirsch’s book, “The Forgotten Ways” as necessary components for exponential for church growth.

We are using this specific tool for the following reasons. First, the leaders of the 100 Movement Initiative have identified ECO as an organization that has the potential to become a true Christian movement. It helps us, therefore, to use those metrics as we continue to work with 100M. Second, as we looked carefully at these qualities, we saw a parallel between their 6 competencies and the 5 shifts that ECO has previously identified.

- From “clergy-centered” to an “unleashed laity”
- From “safety and preservation” to “risk-taking and expansion”
- From “homogeneous leadership prepared for Christendom” to “preparing all of God’s people for a post-Christian culture”
- From “purely attractional model of ministry” to “missional AND attractional”
- From an “addition/subtraction mentality” to “multiplication mindset”

So, in using the movement competencies, we are not changing directions but enhancing where we are already going. Below is a brief description of the competencies.

Competency #1 – Identity Declaring

In several pointed conversations, Jesus asks his followers to declare that He is Messiah- the sent one of God. He tells people that when they declare him as Lord, it will require a clear focus and commitment. Jesus tells them that they will need to choose Him even above their own families. This competency looks at the extent to which a congregation is able to have a singular commitment to Lord. It asks the church to look at its vision and mission to see if they clearly identify Jesus as Lord in word and in deed. To be truly identity declaring, the mission and vision of a church needs to be clear. The mission and vision also needs to be embraced by the congregation and it needs to be consistent with the values of God’s Kingdom for the greater community. This competency also looks at the extent to which the covenant partners sacrificially serve God’s purposes in the congregation and in the world.

Competency #2 Risk Tribalizing

Scripture is full of stories of God calling people to risk for the sake of His mission. We see God calling Abram to leave the land with which he was familiar to go to an unknown place. When Jesus calls the disciples, he tells them to leave everything and follow him. These are not just individual stories, but reflect the theme that if we are going to be His disciples, we must pick up our cross daily and follow Him. This competency examines the extent to which a congregation, its covenant partners, and it’s leaders are willing to risk for the sake of the mission. It also examines if a congregation takes occasional or normative risks.



Competency #3 – Disciple Making

The heart of Christ is that we “make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey everything he has commanded”. This competency looks at how well the church makes fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. It asks the extent to which a congregation is structured and devoted to the making of mature disciples. It also asks whether the covenant partners, especially the leaders, are intentionally investing in others to help them in their maturity as followers of Christ.

Competency #4 Incarnational Messaging

The beauty of God’s mission to restore a relationship with us was that he didn’t require us to first come to Him, but sent Himself in the person of Jesus. We not only see important theology in the incarnation, but we see the strategy of God who was willing to meet us in the messiness of our context. Often churches try to evangelize by attracting people rather than trying to send its people into the world. This competency measures the willingness and consistency with which the church and its covenant partners authentically engage in their surrounding community for the gospel.

Competency #5 Leader Releasing

In recent history, the church has been centered upon the leadership of the clergy and staff of the congregation. The resulting culture that has evolved is that the congregation pays the clergy and staff to do the ministry for them. Every true Christian movement, however, has had at its core an embracing of the totality of the ministry by all of God’s people. This competency looks at a couple of factors. First, it looks at the extent to which the clergy and staff view their role as encouraging, equipping and empowering the body to do its role. Competence in this area means that clergy and staff train and release the people into ministry, rather than do it themselves. This competency also measures the extent to which the congregation understands and embraces their role with the five-fold ministry presented in Ephesians 4.

Competency #6 – Multiplication Organizing

This competency looks at if the church is organized in such a way that encourages the multiplying of leaders, groups and churches. Churches can often be structured for institutional survival and preservation rather than their multiplication. We know that every living thing multiplies. The church is a living organism and should be focused on the multiplication of disciples, groups and leaders. It should be organized to raise up leaders to not only serve the local church, but to be deployed in new contexts.

Healthy Church Competency Survey

Use the following brief evaluation to determine the health of your church in the six movement competencies. Keep in mind that most churches will score low on most or all the competencies. A high score on most would mean that your congregation would already be an exponentially multiplying church.

Scale

Strongly Disagree
1

Disagree
2

Agree
3

Strongly Agree
4

Competency #1 - Identity Declaring

1. We have a mission and vision that is outward focused and owned by the majority of our covenant partners.	1	2	3	4
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2. We allow Jesus' desire for our lives and congregation to win over our personal preferences.	1	2	3	4
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3. Our covenant partners sacrificially serve for the cause of Christ in our surrounding community.	1	2	3	4
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4. As a whole, our covenant partners would be identified as "imitators of Christ".	1	2	3	4
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Total: _____

Competency #2 - Risk Tribalizing

1. We take risks as a church	1	2	3	4
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2. We encourage and promote individuals and groups to be innovative for ministry.	1	2	3	4
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3. We take on ministries that stretch us to rely on the Lord.	1	2	3	4
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4. Our covenant partners spend as much, if not more, time serving outside the church structure as inside of it.	1	2	3	4
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Total: _____

Healthy Church Competency Survey

Competency #3 - Disciple Making

1. We have a clear, comprehensive, and agreed upon definition of a disciple.	1	2	3	4
2. Our leaders actively and intentionally engage in relationships to disciple other people.	1	2	3	4
3. We evaluate potential leaders based on their own personal discipleship.	1	2	3	4
4. We encourage and expect that all of our covenant partners will actively disciple other people.	1	2	3	4

Total: _____

Competency #4 - Incarnational Messaging

1. Our covenant partners view evangelism as something they do outside the walls of the church.	1	2	3	4
2. The community would feel a deep loss if our congregation did not exist.	1	2	3	4
3. We know and respond to the needs of the community.	1	2	3	4
4. Our covenant partners have deep friendships with those who don't know Jesus.	1	2	3	4

Total: _____

Healthy Church Competency Survey

Competency #5 - Leader Releasing

1. Non-paid lay leaders lead most of the ministries of our church.	1	2	3	4
2. We allow those with diverse APEST roles to share in leadership so that we have a balanced church ministry.	1	2	3	4
3. The ministry of the church is not dependent upon the paid staff.	1	2	3	4
4. Our clergy and staff spend more of their time equipping people for ministry than doing it themselves.	1	2	3	4

Total: _____

Competency #6 - Multiplication Organizing

1. We are committing time, energy, and finances to the planting of new churches.	1	2	3	4
2. We are successful at multiplying groups and leaders.	1	2	3	4
3. We actively identify potential leaders and cultivate them to be involved in new churches or micro-expressions of church.	1	2	3	4
4. We have a plan, even if basic, for how we will plant new churches.	1	2	3	4

Total: _____