

SESSION TWO:
HOW WE SEEK TO BE THE CHURCH
Our Strategies to Fulfill God's Purposes

(Paul) I have been all things to all sorts of people that by every possible means I might win some to God. I do all of this for the sake of the Good News.

1 Cor. 9:22-23 (Ph)

I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. 1 Corinthians 1:10

→ Describe how our area would look if everyone was a Christian.

I. OUR STRATEGY

Paul had a strategy to reach people and Jesus' Great Commission to make disciples gives us the vision and incentive to reach out to everyone we can with the good news of Jesus. But that is easier said than done.

Every church has a strategy to fulfill God's purposes, whether it is formally written down or is merely haphazardly thrown together at random. To grow and be effective in today's culture, a church must have a well thought-out strategy that will be biblical, honor God, fulfill God's purposes in the lives of Christians and be culturally relevant to the community it is trying to reach.

A. Vision 2020

Our long-term vision to accomplish by 2020 is:

To spread the love and message of Christ throughout the Nashua area so that we see people transformed by Jesus everywhere.

B. Our Mission:

Our mission focuses our purposes to accomplish a specific goal, like a laser focusing light.

To make disciples who:

- **Love God wholeheartedly**
- **Love people**
- **Serve others**
- **Bring Christ to the world**

C. Our Values:

Our core values describe who we are and what is vitally important to us. These values permeate the life and ministries of Trinity, give us our particular uniqueness as a church, and shape how we do things. They also shape how we pursue our mission. We have six values.

- ***Caring Community***

We are a church where people care for one another and have significant relationships with each other.

- ***Spiritual Growth***

We want people to grow in their spiritual walk and maturity with God. We are committed to Bible study groups and Sunday School and want every person to be in one kind of group study.

- ***Reaching Children and Youth***

Trinity is dedicated to reaching children and youth. We recognize that this segment of society is both open and vulnerable. Children are especially open to believing in Christ and a high percent of children make professions of faith by the time they are 12. But as children move into the teen years, they often start to drift away from the faith and the church. We want to provide the ministries to not only attract children and youth, but we also want to keep youth from drifting away.

- ***Supporting Global Missions***

Trinity's heartbeat is to fulfill the Great Commission by supporting missionaries all over the world. Several from Trinity have gone into the mission field, and we currently take missions trips of youth and adults to Mexico, Haiti, Africa and the U.S.

- ***Strengthening Families***

Families are at the heart of who we are and what our mission is about. We want to build strong families, from strengthening marriages to building healthy relationships between parents and children.

- ***Community Involvement***

We want to be a church that impacts the local community because we care about the community. We want to serve people in the community through acts of love with the desire to see them come to Christ. This is our one aspired value, meaning that it is not yet an engrained value but one that we will be working to develop in the future.

D. Our Priorities

Four practical priorities guide our church as we consider what God wants us to do, how to do it and how to allocate our resources.

1. **God's** _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

VI. OUR STRATEGIES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

There is no perfect strategy and no one right way of building a church. But every church must have a clearly-defined strategy if it is going to be effective. An effective strategy is based on biblical, cultural and effective principles.

A. Steps for Involvement and Growth

Our strategy reflects Jesus' command to make disciples. A disciple is a follower of Jesus.

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations..." Matthew 28:19

We make disciples by first helping a person come to believe in and follow Jesus. Then we encourage and help people to become like Jesus in _____ areas of their life. This is what the Bible calls growing spiritually. It is a process.

We proclaim [Christ], admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. Col. 1:28

As a person grows, they will become more and more what the person is that is described by our mission. They will love God, love people, serve others and bring Christ to the world.

To help a person grow in all areas of their life, we have three simple steps that people can take. Each of these steps can be deepened over time, and also reflect our mission of making disciples. The steps are:

Connect → Grow → Serve

- **Connect:**

- **Connect with God**

- We want people to connect with God. This means to know God, whether it is for the first time when a person first becomes a follower of Jesus or for those who already know him, to get to know God in a deeper way.

- **Connect with People**

- It also means to connect with people. Christianity is always lived out in community with other followers of Jesus. We are a spiritual family, and that means we have relationships with others. In our relationships, we learn how to love others and be loved by them.

- **Grow:**

- We want to mature in our spiritual life. We do this by reading and studying the Bible, learning what God wants us to do and allowing the Holy Spirit to transform our mind, our values, our priorities and our lives. We grow by obeying God and living the way he wants us to live. We want each person to not only be personally reading the Bible, but also to be in a Bible study group, studying the Bible with others.

- **Serve:**

- God has given to each Christian abilities and spiritual gifts that enable us to serve in effective ways. With God working through us, together we can make a significant difference in our church and in our community. Therefore, we want to serve in both areas.

- **Serve in the Church**

- An important part of what it means to be a member of God's family is to serve in a way that helps the church become stronger and better.

- **Serve in the Community**

- We also want to serve others in the community who are not yet followers of Jesus. We serve as a way of showing God's love to them. But we serve more than just by our actions. We also seek to share with people the good news about Jesus. We are witnesses of God's wonderful love and forgiveness in our lives, and we have the privilege of sharing with others what Jesus has done for us on the cross.

As we continue to mature in our spiritual life, these three steps keep deepening and expanding. The deeper we connect with God, the more loving we connect with people and the greater we grow in our understanding and knowledge of the Bible and practice it. The more we grow, the more selfless we serve others and share the good news of Jesus. As we continue to do these things, the more like Jesus we will become. And, as we do this, we will fulfill our mission of making disciples of each individual and, together, as a church.

B. Life Development Growth

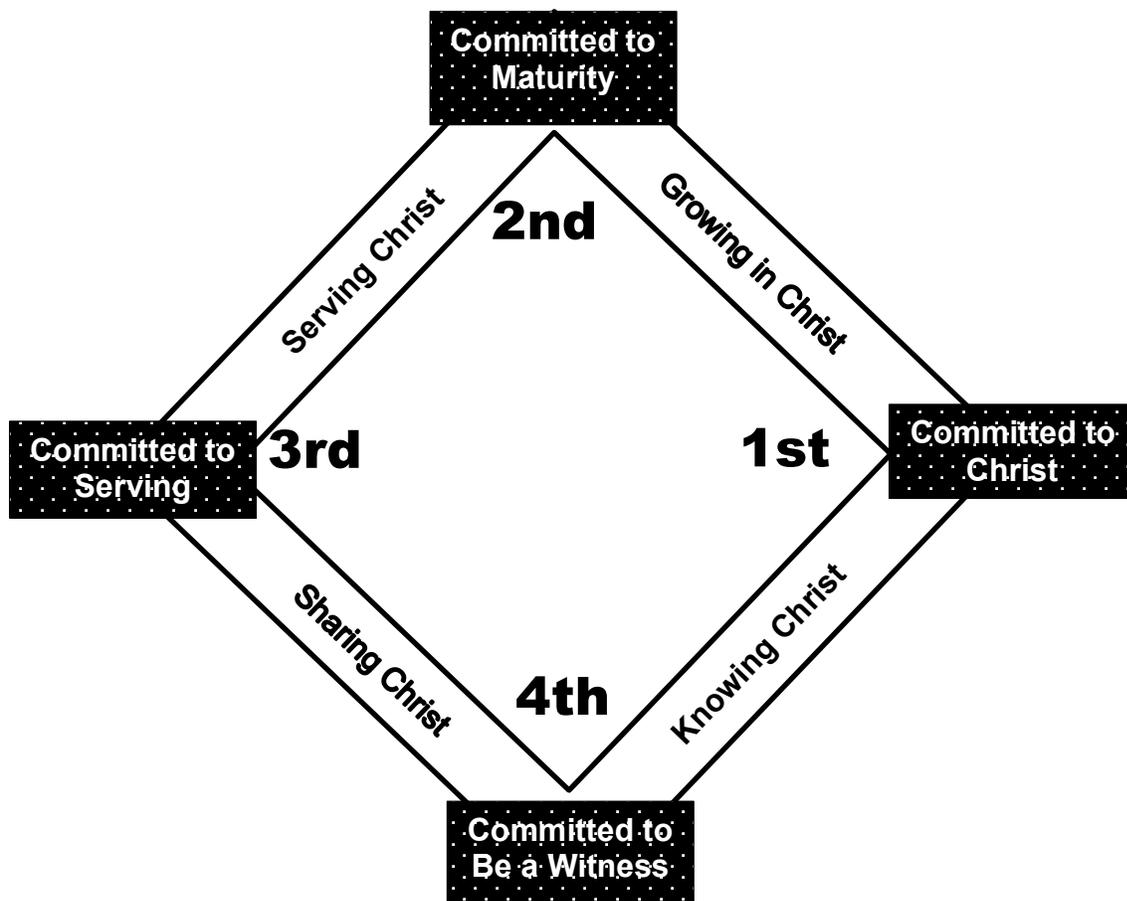
We recognize that Christians will grow at different rates and at different times. We also know that growth is not a smooth, upward line. Because of this, we want to have an environment where people choose their level of commitment, but at the same time, pray that

the Holy Spirit will continue to work in the hearts of people so that they keep on growing and become Christlike and mature as Christians.

Key Principles:

1. We meet people where they _____
2. We encourage people to become what _____ wants
3. People will grow in _____
4. We encourage people to keep _____ until they become fully like Christ
5. We grow best by being in _____ with others.

The first goal is to get people growing; then once they are growing, keep them growing. To accomplish this, we begin by using a baseball diamond as a way of helping people see a process which develops a balanced Christian life.



C. Growth Through Commitments

To motivate people toward home plate, we encourage personal spiritual commitments.

— Commitments are essential because we _____ what we are committed to.

— Commitments are made to _____ and carried out through the _____.

1. The **Membership** Commitment: to identify with and belong to God's Family (the Church) and the local church.

"You are members of God's very own family...and you belong in God's household with every other Christian." Eph. 2:19 (LB)

"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." Rom. 12:4-5

This is encouraged at CLASS _____

2. The **Maturity** Commitment: to grow.

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

2 Peter 3:18

"Take the time and trouble to keep yourself spiritually fit." 1 Tim. 4:7 (Ph)

This is encouraged at CLASS _____

3. The **Ministry** Commitment: to serve by discovering and using my gifts and abilities in serving God and others.

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10

"There are different kinds of service to God...together you form the Body of Christ and each one of you is a necessary part of it." 1 Cor. 12:5,27 (LB)

This is encouraged at CLASS _____

4. The **Mission** Commitment: to be a witness by living with a life mission and by sharing the _____ with others.

"You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." 1 Peter 3:15

This is encouraged at CLASS _____