



FUTURE CHURCH

a four-week vision series

community | transformation | outreach | build



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FUTURE CHURCH

In Psalm 67 the Psalmist cries out to God:

"May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us—so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations."

It's no accident that God has blessed us with so much. It's no accident that He has blessed us with gifts, talents, experiences, finances, personalities, resources. He has blessed us, and continues to bless us, so that all people, from everywhere, will know the great worth of Jesus and lift up their voices in praise of Him.

We are God's children. We are His precious people. We are known by him and designed to bring glory and praise to Him. As a church we want to be committed to do that in a number of ways:

Through Community

Through Transformation

Through Outreach

But to what end?

To the glory of God, we want to be a church that seeks to love God and people from the end of our toes to the ends of the earth.

In this four-week vision series, we'll be thinking about who we are and where we're going as a church. We'll be thinking about what it means to be a loving community that's being transformed into the image of Jesus, to shine his light to the world. ***We'll be thinking about what it means to be a church that seeks to love God and people from the end of our toes to the ends of the earth.***

Christian Standard Bible (CSB) is used in these studies.

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OUTREACH



COMMUNITY
TRANSFORMATION



BUILD



WEEK ONE

STUDY QUESTIONS

In your experience, what does community mean at Village church?

Although God cares about each of us individually, when he saves us we're not simply reconciled to God on our own but are also brought into a community. The Bible sometimes calls this community 'church', or 'family', or in our passage today, a body. One way of thinking about this is that sin broke apart the human race but Jesus is putting us back together.

Take some time to think back to when your Christian experience was at its highest point. What was going on relationally during this time? Discuss with one another what that looked like for you.

Read Ephesians 4:1-7.

Paul writes to the church in Ephesus, in large part, to expand their understanding of God's grace particularly in relation to the life of the church.

From this passage, what's the baseline for Christian community – what's it based on?

How do we know we are part of a grace-driven community?
What are some of the signposts of such a community?

In v.7 Paul says that Jesus gives each of us grace as he sees

fit. How might this change the way we think about one another at Village?

Don Carson, Love in Hard Places:

"The church is...made up of natural enemies. What binds us together is not common education, common race, common income levels, common politics, common nationality, common accents, common jobs, or anything else of that sort. Christians come together...because they have all been saved by Jesus Christ and owe him a common allegiance... They are a band of natural enemies who love one another for Jesus' sake."

What do you think about this quote? Have you experienced something similar in your own life at church?

What stops us from enjoying community?

Read Ephesians 2:11-22.

Why would we even want to strive for diversity at Village Church?

What are some of the things that make unity & community hard?

How does God's grace push us toward committing to one another in love?

What difference does this idea of grace bring to discussions of

community, conflict, forgiveness & reconciliation?

What's one tangible thing you can do this week in order to model this difference (grace) to the other communities you're part of so that God's love might be seen through you?

Community Groups are a practical way we can be strengthening our community. In our Community Groups we want:

- (1) to keep pushing each other in our relationship with God,
- (2) practically & prayerfully care for one another, and
- (3) keep praying for and encouraging each other to share Jesus with those around us who don't yet know him.

Out of these three, what area do you most want to grow in for the second half of the year? What are some practical (maybe even weekly) things you can do to help achieve that aim together?

Here are a few ways that you can take the next step in loving, serving and connecting with our community at Village:



Community Groups



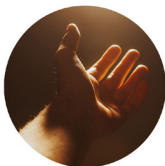
DNA



Events



Village Kids



Prayer



Serving Teams



Village Sport



Youth Group

If you're keen to find out more or get involved more with any of the above, please contact Mitch at mitch@vc.org.au



OUTREACH



COMMUNITY
TRANSFORMATION



BUILD



WEEK TWO

STUDY QUESTIONS

In your experience, how do we do transformation at Village church? What do we prioritise as a church to become more Jesus-like?

Transformation in the Bible

Think about people you know. What do they tend to think is the purpose of life?

As Paul considers suffering in Romans 8:28-29, he says that God has one clear purpose for all our lives:

We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

Is that what you expected? Don't most of us think life is for achieving things, or being happy? But God's purpose for your whole life is this: through everything you experience, all the joys and all the heartaches, all the successes and all the failures, work and unemployment, relationship and conflict, family and loss, health and sickness, through it all you'll become more and more like Jesus. As though that's your greatest good.

How does it strike you to hear 'becoming like Jesus' is the point of your life, your greatest good?

The Bible begins with a picture of humanity created in God's image, to rule the world under God (Genesis 1:27-28). But when Adam and Eve sinned, the image of God was tarnished. Since then, for all of us, we are created in God's image, but we are a long way off looking like God. We need transformation.

The whole New Testament shows us how this actually happens: how we can be transformed again into God's image, through Jesus. Jesus died in our place for our sins. So the Holy Spirit can now live in your heart, since it's been cleansed from sin. And God's Spirit gets to work, changing the desires of your heart, making you more like Jesus. As God became human, Jesus is "the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15). So, the way you

STUDY QUESTIONS

become what you were made to be – “the image of God” (Genesis 1:27) – is becoming like Jesus.

We could look at so many great New Testament passages about transformation. For now we'll look at two, one from Jesus and one from Paul.

John 15:1-17

Ephesians 4:11-5:1

What's the end goal of transformation?

How does transformation happen?

What new behaviours will develop?

What do the two passages teach in common?

Transformation at Village Church

'Becoming like Jesus' is a huge focus of our life together at Village. Becoming like Jesus especially means growing in Christ-like, sacrificial love, for each other – Community – and for others – Outreach. So even these two other focus areas contribute to Transformation.

The primary tool the Spirit uses to make us more like Jesus is God's Word, the Bible, spoken to each other in community. That's why Village Sunday sermons and Community Groups primarily work through books of the Bible, rather than whatever topics the preacher might choose. All the Bible, Old and New Testament, ultimately points us to Jesus. To make sure we keep seeing Jesus together, so that the Spirit might make us more like him, we keep working through books of the Bible together.

We then have various ways of going deeper, in our hearts, minds and lives. To help deal with sin in our lives, we encourage mature Christians to be in close relationships of accountability with each other. If you think you could benefit from that, talk to Nick (men) or Chandra (women).



Contact me at
nick@vc.org.au



Contact me at:
chandra@vc.org.au

Quarterly, women's and men's events help women and men get together to encourage each other on in Christian growth.

To help people in their daily relationships, we aim to run the Marriage Course and Parenting Course on two-yearly rotation.

Village Academy aims to fill a gap between formal theological training, which is great but costly, and the rest of what we do. In three six-week modules each year, we take you through topics we can't do in the same depth elsewhere. Some topics are practical, like how to read the Bible for yourself. Some are cultural, like how Christ relates to justice, power, sexuality, money, environment etc. The aim is that as you grow in your understanding of Christ and how he relates to all other things in the world, you might grow in your Christ-likeness in the world.

Personally, do you really want to become more and more like Christ?

What's the next step you could take in your transformation at Village Church? Here are a few of the next steps you could take at Village:



A Thousand Lives
(Men's Ministry)



Gather
(Women's Ministry)



Marriage Course



Prayer



Parenting Course



Pre-Marriage Course



Traineeship



Village Academy

What are we missing? What more could we do to help each other become more like Christ?

For any thoughts on either of the previous questions (how you'd like to take the next step in transformation, or how we at Village could transformation better), Jeremy would love to hear from you, at jeremy@vc.org.au



OUTREACH



**COMMUNITY
TRANSFORMATION**



BUILD



WEEK THREE

STUDY QUESTIONS

In your experience, what does outreach look like at Village church?

At Village Church, a core part of who we are is a church who seeks to reach out to our wider community in love. This is because “we love because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19). But a part of our hope is that through this love, the light of Christ might shine, “so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). But we acknowledge that there are many barriers to this happening.



If we speak about Jesus to people, a lot of them won't have ears to hear. For some, it's because they have very little trust towards the church and Christians. Because we're aware that people might distrust the church, we seek to meet them where they're at, in starting to rebuild that trust.

Have you seen people moving across these five thresholds before?

Hospitality

You may have noticed at Village Church that a lot of the ways that we connect with people from our wider community is through hospitality and meals! This isn't just because we like to eat (though who doesn't like a good Japanese curry), but because it's an example given to us from Jesus himself.

Eating a meal with someone is a way of showing friendship and welcome. Luke 7: “The Son of Man came eating and drinking.”

This was a part of how Jesus showed friendship and welcome to people. On at least eight occasions in Luke's Gospel, Jesus feeds people. So much so that he even developed a reputation of being the guy who "ate and drank with sinners." Why do you think Jesus considered meals to be so important?

Read through these two passages. From these passages, what motivates us to seek to be hospitable people?

"Above all, maintain constant love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining." 1 Peter 4:8-9

"Let brotherly love continue. Don't neglect to show hospitality, for by doing this some have welcomed angels as guests without knowing it." Hebrews 13:2

Speaking Grace

As people move from trust and into curiosity or openness, hopefully, by God's grace, they might start to ask questions like: "Why do you do this?" or "I can see that you're different. What makes you different?" And it's then that we have to be ready to speak about why Jesus changes our lives.

"Act wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person."
Colossians 4:5-6

What do you think that "gracious, salty speech toward outsiders" sounds like?

Do you feel ready to talk about your trust in Christ to anyone who's curious about it?

NEXT STEPS

How can you be more intentional about inviting friends into your life to share a meal with them? It doesn't have to be anything fancy. Sometimes you may want to make a special effort and celebrate the goodness of creation in a fancy meal. But sharing an ordinary meal with can speak volumes for people.

How can you be more prepared to answer "anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15)? Are there things that have helped others in your group?

How can you be getting more involved in the different outreach ministries that Village is already doing? Here are some of the different outreach ministries in Village:



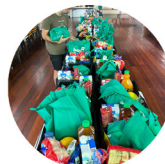
Barista Training



Community Meals



FOCUS (International Students)



Food Boxes



Friends of Kundu



Village Mosaix



Overseas Mission



Prayer



Playgroup



Pop-in Cafe



The Story



World of Yum

How have you seen any of the ministries listed above (in your own life, or through your friends) help to show the love of Christ to people?

What's one of Village Church's Outreach ministries that you'd be keen to get more involved in? If you're keen to get involved in any of Village's Outreach ministries, email sam@vc.org.au



OUTREACH



COMMUNITY
TRANSFORMATION



BUILD



WEEK FOUR

STUDY QUESTIONS

In your own words, what do you think our vision is at Village church?

So far, we've seen that we're a church who really values our community, and seeks to love one another. We're a church who want to be transformed by the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, into the image of Christ. We're a church who want to be reaching out to our wider community, to love them as God has loved us in Jesus. And so this week, in our final week of our vision series, we're going to look at why we do all of that—we're going to look at what's underneath all of those aims. This is our mission statement at Village Church--this is how we seek to build our vision for Village:

We seek to love God and love people from the ends of our toes to the ends of the earth.

In our final study, we're going to look through that sentence, bit-by-bit, to try and draw out how those few words energise everything we do as Village Church.

We seek to love God...

Read Mark 12:28-31. What does it look like for our church to love God...

WITH ALL OUR HEART

WITH ALL OUR SOUL

WITH ALL OUR MIND

WITH ALL OUR STRENGTH

STUDY QUESTIONS

Whatever came to your minds in thinking about loving God, we have to remember:

"Love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, if God loved us in this way, we also must love one another."

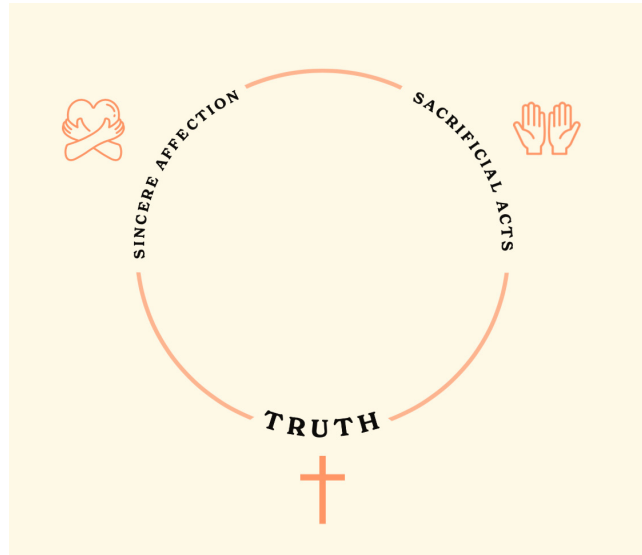
1 John 4:10-11

How does this passage help us to remember what God's love looks like?

...and love people...

"For you were called to be free, brothers and sisters; only don't use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement: Love your neighbor as yourself." Galatians 5:13-14.

If Jesus calls us to love God with everything we have, and to love our neighbours as well... that doesn't really add up. Unless, we are loving God by loving our neighbours. The verse above even goes so far as to say that we're fulfilling the whole law by doing so.



The diagram on the right shows what the Bible means by loving our neighbours. If we want to truly love our neighbours, then this love must have sincere affection, sacrificial action, and the truth of the Gospel in it, or else it's missing an integral part of what the love of Christ is meant to look like.

Which of the three aspects of love do you struggle with most?

...from the ends of our toes to the ends of the earth...

Read Matthew 28:16-20.

Everything we do in community, transformation and outreach is led by this vision: To see Jesus known to the ends of the earth. How do you think we can grow in this goal at Village Church?

Our Gospel Partners

One way that we can all grow is by committing to pray and/or give to our Gospel Partners. Head to vc.org.au/ourpeople to find out more:



The Djamaludins
Interserve Thailand



The Birchleys
CMS PNG



Pria
Mark Drama QLD



Nick
QUT Christians



The Woolletts
Power to Change,
Sydney



The Iedemas
FOCUS



John Board
City Bible Forum
Brisbane



L&C
CMS Missionaries
in Training



Turkish World
J & V

Pray for our church moving forward, that we would be able to love God and love people better, from Kelvin Grove and Spring Hill and beyond, from the ends of our toes to the ends of the earth.



VILLAGE CHURCH
2022