

SERVING A {MOVEMENT}



DOING BALANCED,
GOSPEL-CENTERED
MINISTRY IN YOUR CITY

A New Edition of
Section Three



TIMOTHY KELLER

WITH NEW CONTRIBUTIONS BY

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A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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Serving a Movement

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Requests for information should be addressed to:

Zondervan, 3900 Sparks Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546

ISBN 978-0-310-52057-3

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Cover design: Lucas Art and Design

Interior design: Kait Lamphere

Printed in the United States of America

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SERIES INTRODUCTION

WHAT TO DO

How the gospel is expressed in a particular church in one community at a point in time

- *Local cultural adaptation*
- *Worship style & programming*
- *Discipleship & outreach processes*
- *Church governance & management*

MINISTRY
EXPRESSION



HOW TO SEE

A faithful restatement of the gospel with rich implications for life, ministry, and mission in a type of culture at a moment in history

- *Vision and values*
- *Ministry “DNA”*
- *Emphases, stances*
- *Philosophy of ministry*

THEOLOGICAL
VISION

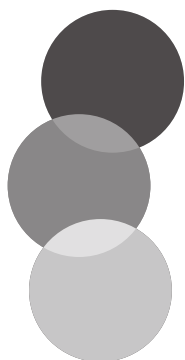


WHAT TO BELIEVE

Timeless truths from the Bible about God, our relationship to him, and his purposes in the world

- *Theological tradition*
- *Denominational affiliation*
- *Systematic & biblical theology*

DOCTRINAL
FOUNDATION



Chapter 1

THE SEARCH FOR THE MISSIONAL CHURCH

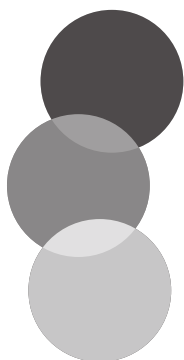
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Keller writes, “The word [*missional*] has significantly different meanings and is used in different ways by different authors, organizations, and churches—leading to much confusion about what, exactly, the term *missional* means.” How have you used or defined *missional*? How has this chapter changed or contributed to your understanding of this term?
2. The concept of *missio Dei* suggests that “God does not merely send the church in mission. God already is in mission, and the church must join him.” What do you believe is the mission of God and what role does the church have in that mission? How would you distinguish between the mission of God and the mission of the church?
3. Of the four understandings of “missional” presented in this chapter, which most closely aligns with your own? What is it about the other understandings that you find objectionable?

4. Four common emphases characterize those who embrace the idea of being missional:

- acknowledging that we have entered a post-Christian age in the West
- recognizing the cultural captivity of the church and the need to contextualize the gospel for a pluralistic society
- affirming that mission is the job of every Christian
- calling the church to be a contrast community

What are some of the unique elements of each emphasis that are discussed in this chapter? Which of these resonated most with you as you read about them? Which is the most difficult to persuade others of within your community?



Chapter 2

CENTERING THE MISSIONAL CHURCH

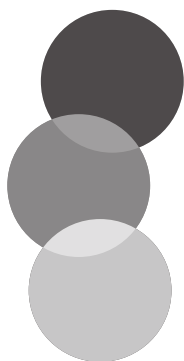
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you agree with this chapter's assertion that no "single *form* of church ... is intrinsically better at growing spiritual fruit, reaching nonbelievers, caring for people, and producing Christ-shaped lives"? Be honest about your own biases—which form is most popular in your context? Why? How might this form be adapted to be more missional?
2. Consider Dieter Zander's story in which he compares the "alien gospel" and the "kingdom gospel." How are these two gospels similar to each other? How does the biblical gospel differ from both of them?
3. Keller writes, "The classic Protestant understanding of the gospel includes the notion that God is holy and we are under his wrath and curse, but that Jesus bore in our place that wrath, curse, and punishment. When we repent and believe in him, we are given both pardon and Christ's righteousness. This electrifying experience of God's grace makes a Christian passionate for doing justice—for pursuing the horizontal aspects of the gospel." Which do you tend to emphasize more in your preaching and teaching, the horizontal or the vertical? How are these two aspects of the gospel connected?

4. Six marks of a missional church are presented in this chapter. A missional church should:

- confront society's idols and address how modernity makes the desires of the individual into an absolute
- contextualize skillfully and discourse in the vernacular, recognizing that many people are simply unable to understand the basic concepts of God, sin, and redemption
- recognize that all Christians are people in mission in every area of their lives
- understand itself as a servant community—a counterculture for the common good
- be contextualized and expect nonbelievers, inquirers, and seekers to be involved in most aspects of the church's life and ministry
- practice Christian unity on the local level as much as possible

For each of these marks, what unique challenges and opportunities does it provide for communicating the gospel? Which of these does your church need to focus on right now?



Chapter 3

EQUIPPING PEOPLE FOR MISSIONAL LIVING

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

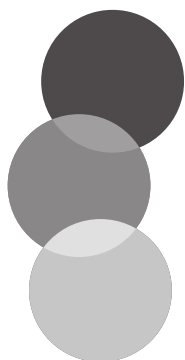
1. Read through the various examples of every-member gospel ministry. Which of these situations sound similar to something you have done personally? Which of them spark creative ideas for sharing your faith, as well as for leading others to do so? What could your team do to become more intentional in this type of gospel ministry? Can you add to the list other examples you have seen in your community?
2. What do you think of the idea that people may need to be “welcomed into community long enough for them to hear multiple expressions of the gospel—both formal and informal—from individuals and teachers” before coming to faith? What might keep a nonbeliever from being involved in your community? What are you doing to welcome nonbelievers into your community of faith?
3. This chapter presents the idea of believers having “Christian relational integrity.” This means they have an impact for the gospel on the people around them if they are *like* those around them, yet profoundly different and *unlike* them, all the while remaining very visible and *engaged*. What do you think it means to be *like*, *unlike*, and *engaged with* your community? How do you think your team members are doing in each of these areas? How would you rate your church in the area of relational integrity?

4. Which of the various ideas for providing safe venues do you currently practice in your ministry? How “safe” would an unbeliever rate the venues you provide? What single safe venue would you like to prototype?

REFLECTIONS ON MISSIONAL COMMUNITY

*Tim Chester, author and pastor of The Crowded
House and founder of Porterbrook Seminary*

CORE CONVICTIONS	CORE IDENTITIES	CORE PRACTICES
Community	We are family.	a family meal
Word	We are disciples.	time in the Word
Mission	We are missionaries.	a third space
Mission through community	We are a missional community.	gospel intentionality in everyday life



Chapter 4

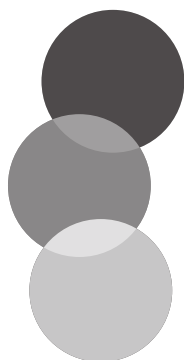
THE BALANCE OF MINISTRY FRONTS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the metaphors of the church given in Scripture (a holy nation, a family, the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, a royal priesthood, the temple of God's Spirit, God's field and harvest, branches on a vine, etc.) do you naturally tend to prioritize? How do these priorities make your church unique?
2. Which of the five models of church described by Avery Dulles most closely align with your own church's model?
 - the *church as institution* model—emphasizes doctrine, theology, and ordained ministerial authority
 - the *church as mystical communion* model—points to the church as organic community and fellowship
 - the *church as sacrament* model—accents corporate worship
 - the *church as herald* model—preeminently does evangelism and preaching
 - the *church as servant* model—a radical community committed to social justice

How would you describe your church model to others? What would you emphasize?

3. Keller writes, “When the institutional church gives attention to cultural engagement—the fourth and final ministry front—it does so primarily by *disciplining* a community of believers who work as the church organic. By teaching the Christian doctrine of vocation, the goodness of creation, the importance of culture, and the practice of Sabbath, it should be inspiring and encouraging its members to go into the various channels of culture.” Do you agree with this premise? What are some of the dangers of the institutional church getting directly involved in this work? What are some of the practical ways your church can disciple believers to engage the culture?



Chapter 5

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO GOD

HISTORIC EMPHASIS	CONTEMPORARY EMPHASIS	CONVERGENCE EMPHASIS
<p>LITURGICAL</p> <p>Emphasis on the physical and the senses; Eucharist is central</p> <p>High: Anglican</p> <p>Moderate: Lutheran, Episcopal</p> <p>Lower: Continental Reformed, Methodist</p>	<p>PRAISE AND WORSHIP</p> <p>Emphasis on the emotional; praise music is central</p> <p>African American: AWE, National Baptist</p> <p>Classic Pentecostal: Assemblies of God, Church of God in Christ, Foursquare</p> <p>Contemporary praise/worship: Calvary Chapels, Vineyards</p> <p>Traditional-praise “blend”: 50/50 worship songs and hymns</p>	<p>FUSIONS OF BOTH FORM AND MUSIC</p> <p>Emphasis on the mystical; story is central</p> <p>Liturgical contemporary: Original form was the “folk Mass” of charismatic Catholics and Anglicans. Now we have a variety of specific liturgical traditions (Anglican, Reformed, etc.) or an amalgamated “Great Tradition” using traditional folk, pop/soft rock, indie rock, jazz, rhythm and blues/gospel, hip-hop, eclectic, and others</p>
<p>TRADITIONAL</p> <p>Emphasis on the mental; sermon is central</p> <p>Free church: Puritan/Reformed, many independent churches</p> <p>Body life: Anabaptist, Quaker, smaller churches, Jesus movement</p> <p>Revivalist: Baptist, Methodist</p>	<p>SEEKER-ORIENTED WORSHIP</p> <p>Emphasis on the practical; theme is central</p> <p>Seeker-driven service: Willow Creek</p> <p>Seeker-sensitive worship: Saddleback</p>	

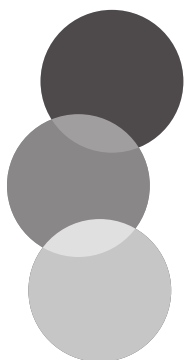
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the five categories of worship traditions most closely matches your own personal style and recent history?

- *liturgical*—emphasis on the physical
- *traditional*—emphasis on the mental
- *praise and worship*—emphasis on the emotional
- *seeker-oriented*—emphasis on the practical
- *fusions of both form and music*—emphasis on the mystical

Have you experienced worship in each of the other traditions? What did you learn from those experiences?

2. Keller writes, “Many now-historic [worship] traditions were once innovative revisions of an older approach.” Have you ever researched the history of your tradition’s liturgy (or lack thereof)? Against which prior trends was it a reaction? Which beliefs and preferences informed it?
3. Consider the seven suggestions for making worship comprehensible to unbelievers. Which of these are you currently doing? What can you begin to do to make your worship more understandable to outsiders?
4. Do you hear the objection that your church should have “deeper, meatier teaching” in worship? Do you have venues outside the worship service to deal with the “details and distinctions,” and do people really hear them there? Can you make your own list of substantial and controversial topics that you “hit hard and often” in your preaching?



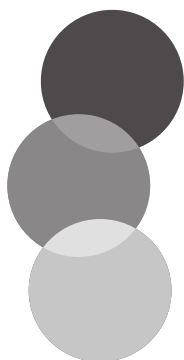
Chapter 6

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO ONE ANOTHER

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Keller writes, “The essence of becoming a disciple is, to put it colloquially, becoming like the people we hang out with the most.” Does this describe your own experience? How has the community you belong to uniquely shaped and directed your own growth as a Christian? Whom should you hang out with more often?
2. Keller writes, “Exceptional character in individuals cannot prove the reality of Christianity ... What atheism and other religions *cannot* produce is the kind of loving community that the gospel produces.” Consider your Christian witness as a community. What are some of the ways your church community lives and relates to one another in distinctly Christian ways? How are you a witness to the surrounding culture?
3. Keller writes, “Churchly piety puts the emphasis on corporate processes—baptism, submission to the elders and pastors, catechesis in the church’s historical confessions ... Today, however, most evangelical churches stress individualistic piety, which emphasizes private devotions and spiritual disciplines, small group fellowship (with little or no elder oversight), personal witness and service, and participation in many broadly evangelical cooperative ventures.” Which version of piety is most commonplace in your church? Which of the following suggestions for a balanced “ecclesial revivalism” are most helpful to you?

- Preach for conversion, yet honor communicant status.
- Develop a way of examining candidates for membership.
- Recover catechesis so it is communal, participatory, and physically embodied.
- Recognize that seekers need a process that is both evangelistic and theologically edifying.
- Use the baptism and reception of members to instruct and disciple.
- Use the anticipation of the Lord's Supper as a springboard for a season of preparation focused on covenant renewal.

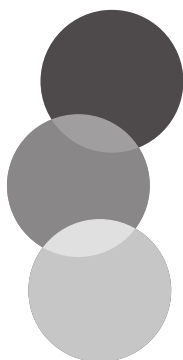


Chapter 7

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO THE CITY

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean, biblically, to be a *neighbor*, to *serve* others, and to *do justice*? How do our definitions of these terms compare with your own understanding?
2. Discuss the differences between relief, development, and reform. Which of these have you or your church community been involved in? Do you believe the local church should participate in the work of development and reform? Why or why not?
3. Keller writes, “Ultimately, it is impossible to separate word and deed ministry because human beings are integrated wholes—body and soul. It is both natural and necessary that ministers of mercy also minister the Word while they are in the process of meeting human needs, and that communicators of the gospel also show compassion with regard to the material needs of the people they are trying to reach. An integrative ministry means weaving together word and deed ministry as much as possible.” How are you and your church seeking to weave together these two aspects of ministry?



Chapter 8

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO THE CULTURE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In your own ministry context, how have you seen and experienced the effects of dualism? Where have you seen secular institutions retreating from partnership with religious institutions? How has dualism led you to be less integrated in public and in your relationships with others? Where is your church unwittingly retreating from culture and accepting this premise of a private/public dichotomy?
2. If you currently serve in full-time ministry, have you ever worked outside of professional ministry? If so, how does your time in the workforce inform the ways you prepare your congregation for Christ-honoring vocation? If you haven't worked in another vocation, have you ever felt limited in your ability to compellingly argue for biblical ethics and integration at work?
3. This chapter suggests four ways that churches can help Christians see how the gospel informs and shapes their work:
 - Our faith changes our motivation for work.
 - Our faith changes our conception of work.
 - Our faith provides high ethics for Christians in the workplace.
 - Our faith gives us the basis for reconceiving the very way in which our kind of work is done.

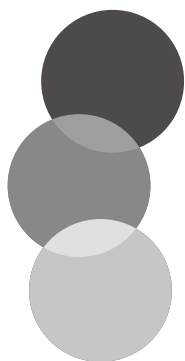
Which of these is most meaningful to you right now? How can you begin to teach and disciple believers to reflect on each of these four ways of relating faith to work?

4. Keller writes, “Each vocation presents many spiritual and moral issues, ethical quandaries, temptations, discouragements, and other questions that particularly confront the Christians in that profession. A good deal of spiritual nurture in the church is very general and only addresses generic or private-world matters. But we spend most of our week in our vocational field, and we need to hear how other Christians have dealt with the same problems we face every day.” Think about the various vocations represented in your church and community. How can you begin to encourage and nurture believers to work accountably in their profession?

REFLECTIONS ON INTEGRATIVE MINISTRY

*Daniel Montgomery and Mike Cospers, pastors at Sojourn
Community Church in Louisville, Kentucky*

	KELLER	MONTGOMERY/ COSPER
GOSPEL	<p>“Gospel Calculus”</p> <p>Two methods: systematic, narrative</p> <p>Three major themes: (Home/Exile, Yahweh/Covenant, and Kingdom)</p> <p>Three aspects: the incarnation and the “upside-down” aspect, the atonement and the “inside-out” aspect, and the resurrection and the “forward-back” aspect</p>	<p>Kingdom</p> <p>Cross</p> <p>Grace</p>
CHURCH	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Connecting people to God (through evangelism and worship) 2. Connecting people to one another (through community and discipleship) 	<p>Worshippers</p> <p>Disciples</p> <p>Family</p> <p>Servants</p> <p>Witnesses</p>
WORLD	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Connecting people to the city (through mercy and justice) 4. Connecting people to the culture (through the integration of faith and work) 	<p>Location</p> <p>Vocation</p> <p>Recreation</p> <p>Restoration</p> <p>Multiplication</p>



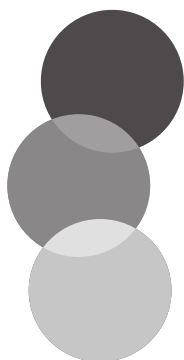
Chapter 9

MOVEMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS

INSTITUTION	MOVEMENT
Held together by rules and procedure	Held together by common purpose, vision
A culture of rights and quotas; a balance of responsibilities and rewards	A culture of sacrificial commitment
Emphasis on compensation, “extrinsic” rewards	Emphasis on celebration, “intrinsic” rewards
Changes in policy involve long process, all departments, much resistance and negotiation	Vision comes from charismatic leaders; accepted with loyalty
Decisions made procedurally and slowly	Decisions made relationally and rapidly
Innovations from top down; implemented in department silos	Innovations bubble up from all members; executed by the whole
Feels like a patchwork of turf-conscious mini-agencies or departments	Feels like a unified whole
Values: security, predictability	Values: risk, serendipity
Stable, slow to change	Dynamic, quick to change
Emphasis on tradition, past, and custom; future trends are dreaded and denied	Emphasis on present and future; little emphasis on past
Jobs given to those with accreditation and tenure	Jobs given to those producing best results

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What would happen if your organization suddenly had to leave its building, was cut off from denominational support structures, was deprived of endowments and bank balances, and experienced the loss of its senior leader? Would there be a resilient institution remaining that could pick itself up, start over by the grace of God, and raise up new leaders from within? If not, which of the three types of stagnant structures (subsidized from without, managed by endowment life support, or propped up by a small overworked core) best describes your congregation or organization?
2. This chapter suggests four key characteristics of a movement: vision, sacrifice, flexibility with unity, and spontaneity. How have you experienced these in your own ministry or church setting? In your experience, how does each of these characteristics contribute to the dynamics of the movement?
3. Review the table contrasting institutions with movements. As you consider your own church, what characteristics of a movement do you see? What characteristics of an institution are present? What can you do to encourage additional movement dynamics in your church?



Chapter 10

THE CHURCH AS AN ORGANIZED ORGANISM

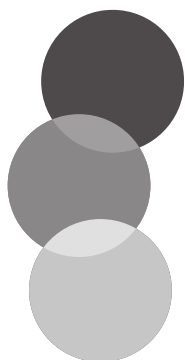
Institution

Movement



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe the difference between the *general* office and the *special* office. What are the three aspects of ministry that belong to every believer as part of the general office? What are some of the functions and roles given to the special office? How does the distinction between these two help you to better strike the balance between the church as a vital organism and a structured organization?
2. Keller writes, “The willingness to sacrifice on the part of workers and members is perhaps the key practical index of whether you have a movement or have become institutionalized.” Take a moment to check the temperature of your volunteer culture. Look at the faces in your church directory and ask how aggressively they are sacrificing. Is the answer indicative of a movement or have you become institutionalized? How might this relate to the vision of your church, or the lack of vision?
3. Keller writes, “Churches, laypersons, and ministers regularly have bad experiences in imbalanced churches and in response flee to the opposite extreme.” Are there any conflicts or dysfunctions in your church that you now understand better in light of this statement?



Chapter 11

CHURCH PLANTING AS A MOVEMENT DYNAMIC

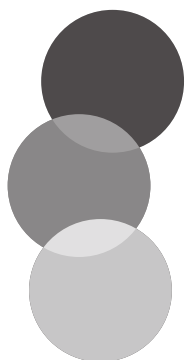
PIONEERING CHURCH PLANTING	CHURCH-LED CHURCH PLANTING
Ministers/leaders are often self-initiators	Church leaders are selected by church body, but a church can also call and send
No core members; pioneer gets all core members through networking and evangelism	Members come from (1) pooling cell groups and (2) hiving off distant families
Money from (1) mission agency, (2) raising of personal support from friends and churches, (3) tent-making/self-employment, or (4) two or all of the above	Money from (1) core group pledge, (2) gift/subsidy from mother church, (3) outside grants from distant churches or individuals, or (4) two or all of the above
Mentor is a distant pastor or leader, seen infrequently; or reading-only mentor (dead or distant)	Regular meetings with nearby mentor; often peer supervision possible
Model is often innovative, forging new models or imitating distant ones	Model is similar to mother church, though never identical

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. This chapter asserts that in a healthy church, “church planting must be natural and regular, not traumatic and episodic.” To make church planting a more natural aspect of ministry, begin by honestly considering three questions:
 - *Resources*—Are you able and willing to give away resources and lose control of your money, members, and leaders?
 - *Control*—Are you ready to give up some control of the shape of the ministry itself?
 - *Fear*—Are you more concerned about the kingdom or the opinions of your own tribe?

Which of these three areas presents your current ministry team with the greatest barrier to planting a new church? If you are preparing to plant a church, how can you build these considerations into the life of your church from the very beginning?

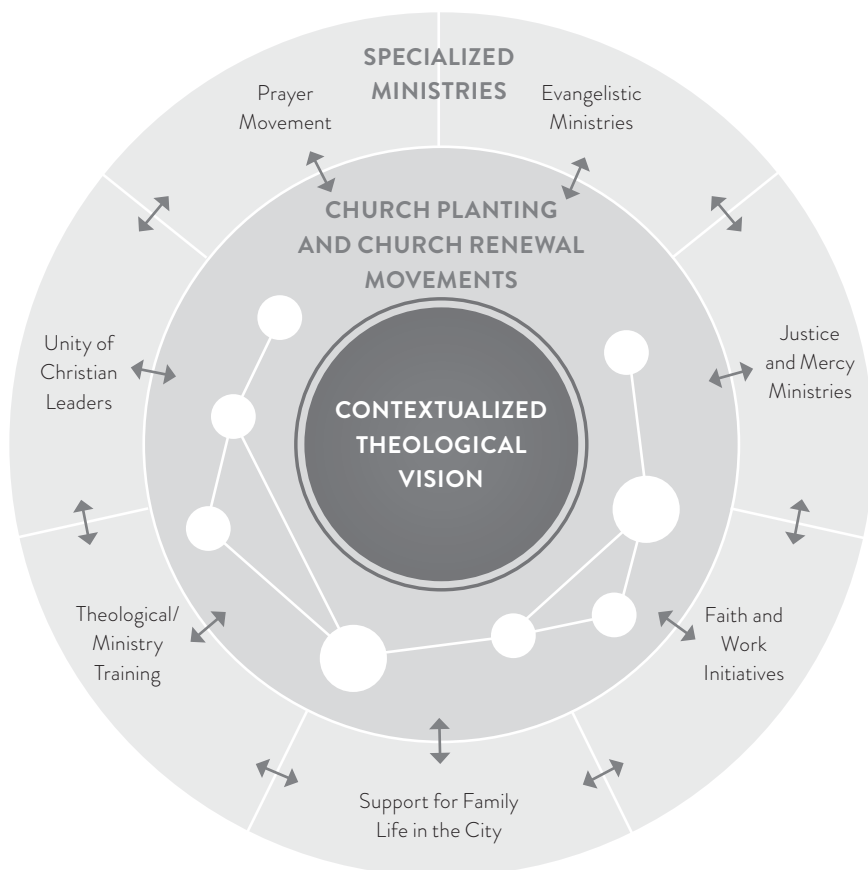
2. How would you answer the objection that “we don’t need to start new churches; we should strengthen and fill our existing churches before we do that.” Do you find this chapter’s answers to this objection compelling? Why or why not?
3. Keller writes, “The only way to significantly increase the number of Christians in a city is by significantly increasing the number of new churches.” What insights do you draw from the comparison of cities A, B, and C in this chapter? When you consider the kingdom math involved, are you convicted? Is your city more like A, B, or C?
4. Review the profiles described in the “Learn” church planting stage (interior life, contextual life, common worldview with defeater beliefs and “A” and “B” doctrines, area religious institutions). What can you learn from this process? Regardless of whether or not you are currently involved in church planting, how might creating these profiles help you apply what you are learning in new ways?



Chapter 12

THE CITY AND THE GOSPEL ECOSYSTEM

A GOSPEL ECOSYSTEM FOR A CITY



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Keller writes, “Reaching a city requires a willingness to work with other churches, even churches that hold to different beliefs and practices—a view sometimes called ‘catholicity.’” How have you partnered with other congregations that have historical traditions or theological distinctives different from your own? What led you to partner together?
2. Take some time to envision what the gospel ecosystem looks like—and might look like—in your community. Which elements are strongest and weakest? How can you move beyond ministerial alliances you have made in the past? Which key leaders, congregations, and organizations would need to be on board?

REFLECTIONS ON MOVEMENT DYNAMICS

*Alan Hirsch, founding director of the Forge Mission
Training Network and founder of 100Movements*

