

CORE VALUES

Introduction: Today (in America) we ‘ecclesiastical inbreeding’ (cloning) instead of true church planting. Values are behaviors and behaviors show our values. Core values can and should serve as clarifying mechanisms that call us back to the plumb line of the gospel, but also the plumb line of the vision that God crafted in our heart in the first place. Most churches’ values start with ‘we believe’. Value statements don’t start with ‘we believe’ but with ‘we behave’.

The Next Step...Core Values in their Proper Place

- We gain clarity and focus.
- They become a set of directions or directives for how we will develop disciples.
- They become a set of metrics. (Measurable)
- Generally our core values are drawn from Scripture.
- Specifically (contextually) our core values are drawn from Jesus’ life. Ask yourself, ‘How did Jesus behave?’ What are the consistent themes we see when we look at Jesus’ life?

The Role of your Vision Narrative and Other Components with Core Values

Some people say you can start with your values and develop your narrative out of them. But we must first craft our narrative and then our values will become evident. Our values need to be clearly defined.

Steps to Craft Your Core Church Values

- Look at Scripture, the gospels, and Jesus’ life.
- Make a list of 8-10 consistent themes or words you see exhibited in Jesus’ life. Determine the context. This helps us determine how disciples are to live.
- Look at 1 Cor. 9 (‘...all things to all men that I might reach some...’)
- Exegete the culture. Find out what values or behaviors they are exhibiting.
- Form a bridge between discipleship values and values of the culture.
- Add our personal values.

Summary of Steps to Craft Your Core Church Values

Take cultural values and kingdom values and discover where they overlap to find common ground. Good relationships are the key because relationships focus on behavior.

A church planter should have 3 core values (optimally), but not more than 5 because at that point they will be too hard to remember.

How to Choose (Filter) the Right Core Values for Our Church

- Permission to Play Values: Values that identify us.
- Aspirational Values: Foundational values.
- Accidental Values: Values we ‘fall into’. Default values.

Key Question: “How do our values fit into our context?” Don’t mimic our culture but speak Kingdom values into it. When you write your core values, write them as uniquely as possible. Example of ‘Redemption Journey’.

Additional Notes/Homework:

