

# HIGHLIGHTS

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N. Erik Nielsen

## Through Our Worship

Darryl Evetts

## Through Disciple- Making

## TURNING THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN

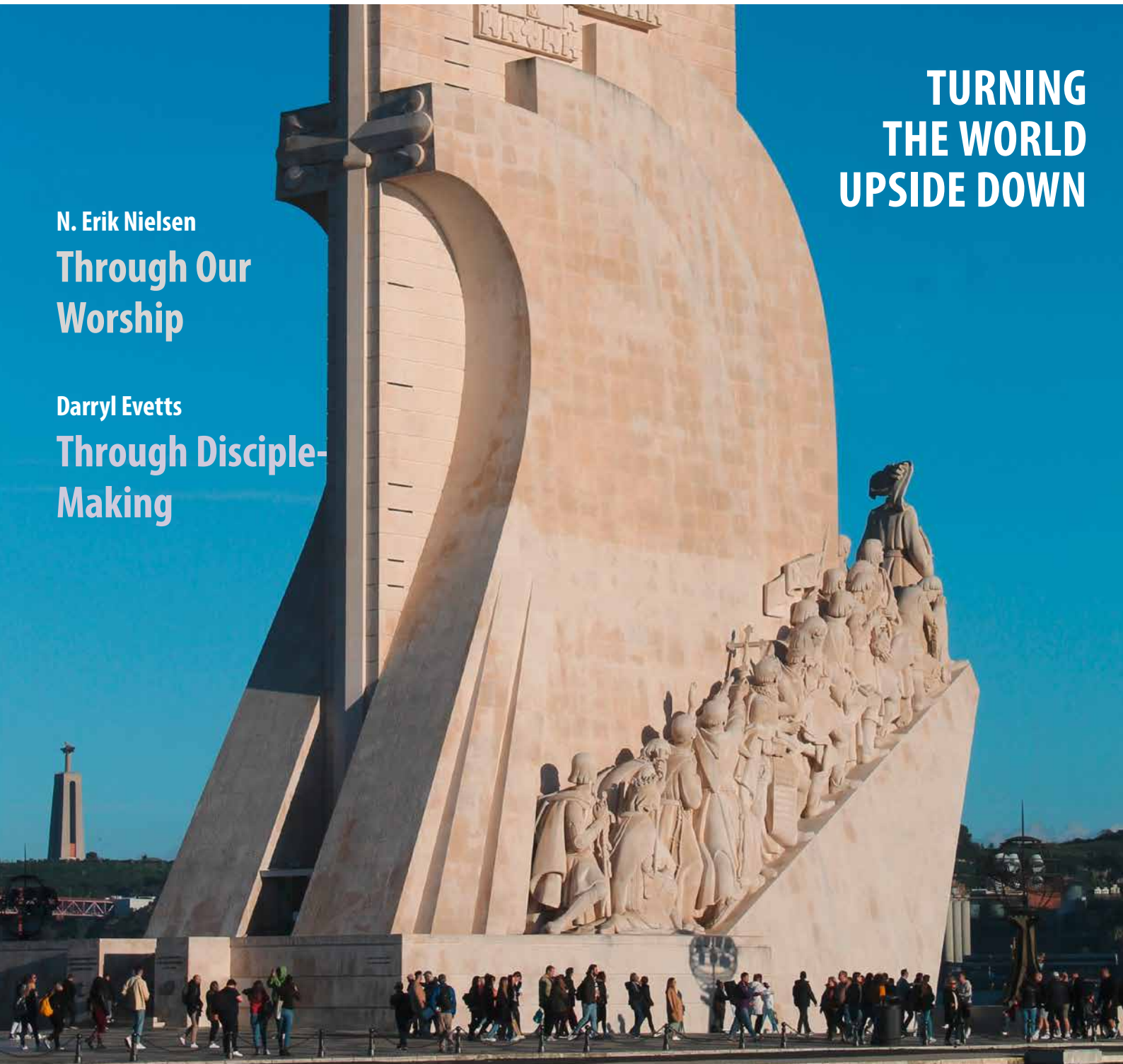




Photo by Judith Lynn Maxwell

# When Our World Turns Upside Down

Key world events define our lives. For earlier generations, they could tell you exactly where they were and what they were doing when they heard the news of victory in Europe or that U.S. President John F. Kennedy had been shot. For my generation, it was initially the day the space shuttle Challenger exploded. Fifteen years later, the key moment became the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the U.S. Pentagon. Today’s generation remembers Russia’s attack on Ukraine.

Key personal moments also define our lives – the first day of school, graduation, university days, our wedding day, birth of children, a new job, a move, death of a loved ones. All of these events could be ones that “turn our world upside down” – for good or for bad. Turning the World Upside Down is the theme of this edition of *Highlights*. We adopted that theme from the theme of our Ministry Leadership Conference which is also featured in this edition.

Ralph Cunnington, pastor of City Church in Manchester, England, taught through 10 chapters of Acts, looking at how first the Jerusalem church and then the Antioch church turned the first century world upside and had a far-reaching impact – affecting each of us today.

The picture above is one I took more than 20 years ago and hangs on our wall at home with this verse of Scripture: *Great is his faithfulness; his loving-kindness begins afresh each day* (Lamentations 3:23, TLB). No matter whether our world is upside down or right-side up, God is faithful. Sunrises remind of us that. His mercy, grace, love, and kindness are new for us each and every morning. We hope you will be renewed and challenged by this edition of *Highlights*.

Judith Lynn Maxwell  
*Highlights Editor*

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Cover photo: The Padrão dos Descobrimentos portrays 16<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese explorers who left Lisbon to discover the world – turning the world as it was known upside down. By Judith Lynn Maxwell

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# The Potential to Turn Our World Upside Down

The Ministry Leadership Conference in Lisbon delivered what IBC leaders love. We enjoyed significant conversations with people that we love. Even more, we were blessed by exegetical preaching with good application. By leading us through the development of the church in the book of Acts, Ralph Cunnington was able to keep us centered in the gospel while explaining the characteristics of international churches that impact their host communities and beyond. Ralph serves a church that is as international as many of our churches, and like us, he desires to reach the nations by sending out disciple-makers.

Ralph doesn't just talk about it. He is doing it. I appreciated Ralph's examples and reminders from Scripture. We must continually examine ourselves and our churches to see that we are aligned to God's purposes and godly practices. Our churches have great potential to reach the world for Christ. The cultures that we live in desperately need the good

news that we bring. At the same time, we must remain vigilant regarding the spiritual life and ministry of leaders, as well as the health of local congregations. We minister out of our own weakness and are prone to let our guard down. It was good to be reminded of the struggles associated with following Christ and making disciples. In the meantime, we are reassured that we can trust God to do His work and to do it through people like us that He has called to serve Him.

In the IBC, we have a particular context and I see that many of our churches have potential to turn the world upside down. We have been entrusted with English-speaking, international congregations strategically placed around the globe and reaching the majority of nations in our world. Because of our context, we have great potential to impact our world with the gospel. As we deepen our love for God and His Word and respond obediently as He leads, we look forward to what God will do. 



by Tim Faulkner  
General Secretary



# Turn the World Upside Down is the Challenge of MLC 2023

Ralph Cunnington, pastor of City Church, Manchester, England, challenged those attending the IBC's Ministry Leadership Conference, 17-21 March in Lisbon, Portugal, to turn their world upside down.

Preaching through 10 chapters of the book of Acts (Acts 11:19-20:38), Cunnington used the Jerusalem church and particularly the Antioch church to draw parallels to the international church of today. Just like the Antioch church, IBC churches today need to be a hub church, a sending church, a church that reaches the city, and a culturally engaged church. The church today, like the 1<sup>st</sup> century church, faces danger and always needs shepherds.

In his opening message, Cunnington reminded those attending that up until Acts 9, no Gentile had committed to Christ. It took three visions for Peter to go to the Gentiles. Yet, in chapter 11, Cunnington said, there is a shifting of gears. The focus shifts from Peter to Paul and from the Jerusalem church to the church in Antioch. Antioch was an international hub church to the Gentile world. A hub church has three features, Cunnington said – it was gathered widely, it was trained in the truth, and it gave away generously (Acts 11:19-30).

In the 1<sup>st</sup> century, everyone wanted to go to Antioch, but it was also very broken. It was the Manchester, Berlin, Lisbon, or Paris of the ancient Mid-East. But the gospel came to Antioch. The church at Antioch was made up of believers from around the ancient world. They came to Antioch because of the persecution happening in Jerusalem. But it was God's reason for turning the world upside down. In 11:20, "men from Cyprus and Cyrene" came to Antioch. These were unnamed, ordinary men who God used to gather His church.

The church was trained in the truth. Once the church was planted, this became the priority. The church in Jerusalem sent one of their best – Barnabas – to teach them and help them remain true to the Word, Cunnington said. He cheered them on to persevere; he taught them. He knew he needed help, and he invested his own time and resources to get the best trainer. A hub church cannot grow without Barnabases, Cunnington said. Growing churches need to invest in training; God expects us to share the load and train new people

A hub church gives generously. The Jerusalem church sent one of their best to Antioch. Later, Antioch gave back materially and sent two of their

best to hand-deliver the offering. As international churches, there is a temptation to give up emotionally, Cunnington said, because people are always leaving. Yet, for our sake, Christ became poor so that we might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9).

In his second message, Cunnington fast forwards several years as Antioch becomes a sending church in what he likes to call the "Antioch Project" – a church plant that is planting churches. Like Antioch, a sending church has three characteristics – sending is driven by worship, sending means sacrifice, and sending requires courage.

In chapter 13, Cunnington said, the names of the leaders are listed. This is to illustrate how mixed the church in Antioch is – socially, ethnically, economically, culturally. The church is mixed and so is its leadership. Worship is not just the end of mission but the start. Yet, sending requires sacrifice and courage. Paul and Barnabas arrive back from Jerusalem – ready to lead and disciple. But the Holy Spirit leads the Antioch leaders to set apart their best men for a mission and send them again. If a church is sending, Cunnington said, it will meet interest and opposition. It will take courage to determine when to meet opposition with a conciliatory approach or a no-holds-barred approach. Are we willing to be a sending church? Are we courageous enough to go ...



Ralph Cunnington



Tim Faulkner washes the feet of new Core Strategy Directory Brian Kirby.



Enjoying a typical Fado dinner.

to send .. to send our best? He concluded this message with the quote: “A mark of a great church is not its seating capacity but its sending capacity.”

“What will ruin the church you lead?” Cunnington asked at the beginning of his third message. In Acts 1-11, we see the Jerusalem church grow from 28 to 3,000 then 5,000 plus women and children. Then, in chapters 13-28, we see the church at Antioch grow rapidly in numbers, diversity, and depth. In chapter 15, we see a problem that could bring everything down, Cunnington said. The gospel was being attacked at its very core. In the first 14 chapters, the good news was received by grace. Now in chapter 15, believers are wanting to require circumcision for salvation.

“What makes Christianity unique?” Cunnington asked. All others say, “Do this.” Christianity says “Done.” Jesus plus anything denies the gospel. The moment we add to the good news, we make it nothing. The gospel is for all people, at all places, at all times. God is glorified as people from every tribe, nation, and tongue gather to worship Him.

In verses 6-19, we see the gospel defended, Cunnington said. This issue is so serious that Paul and Barnabas put everything on hold to go to Jerusalem. There they defend the gospel message. There the apostles and elders determined not to make it difficult for the Gentiles to become believers. They describe four rules for Gentiles to follow that would show them how to live out the gospel and let it shine – make a firm and decisive break from worshipping idols; live radically different from the world around them; and do not make it difficult for your Jewish brothers to come to salvation.

Ministry in the post-Christian world is hard, Cunnington said in session four. There is a temptation to give up. In Acts 16, we find three surprising conversions that give us hope. In Lydia’s conversion, we

see God will work through His Word. Our job is to speak; God’s job is to open hearts.

The slave girl in verses 16-21 is the equivalent of today’s trafficked prostitute that we are called to care for and protect. Most of our churches don’t have trouble reaching Lydias, Cunnington said, but that approach won’t work with people like this woman. We can’t invite them in; we have to go to them. We have to address their spiritual problems as well as the physical needs. We need to bring them freedom in Christ.

We need to make the most of every opportunity that we are given is demonstrated in the conversion of the Philippian jailer. Paul and Silas were praying and singing praises despite having been beaten and put in stocks; they had a captive audience. In incredible pain, they reached out to help a dying man.

Each of these three conversions are extremely different, Cunnington said, but each was saved by the same gospel and welcomed into the same church.

Twenty-first century Europe has more in common with 1<sup>st</sup> century Europe than with Europe 50 years ago, Cunnington said in his fifth message. Christianity is a small minority and is dismissed as irrelevant. Becoming a culturally engaged church doesn’t start in the culture; it begins in our own hearts.



David Martin, Naomi Brown, and Daniel Matzeit lead worship in song.



Bill and Naty Tully (l) share about their work with Ukrainian refugees.



Worshops on a variety of topics are part of MLC.

photos by Nicole Horn

We must mourn and go. “Do you share care and concern for those in your city?” Cunnington challenged. Paul chose to go and preach in the places from where news was spread. Our approach is usually, “come and see.” Instead, we need to “go and tell.”

As we tell, we need to engage and challenge our listeners. And we need to tell of wrath and repentance. We have to insist there is a right and wrong. Becoming a Christian is a radical change of direction. We can turn because Jesus is the one who never turned; He followed the path set before Him by God.

Cunnington concluded his series of messages with a word for pastors and leaders. In Acts 20, Paul wants to get to Jerusalem in time for Pentecost but

he wants to meet with the elders from Ephesus. Paul had a message for the elders that is just as important today as then.

Watch yourself, Cunnington said. There are lots of different ways to shipwreck your ministry. Two key dangers are stress or burnout and sexual sin. God’s people’s greatest need is not your overwork; it’s your holiness, Cunnington said.

Shepherd or tend to the people. Without faithful Bible teaching, people will wither and die. We need to be discipling people all the time. The most fruitful time of ministry and Bible study is in the homes of members.

Guard the people because there are savage wolves about. Churches are not destroyed by persecution; they are destroyed by false teachers. The wolves’ methods are to distort the truth to draw the people to themselves.

A church needs shepherds, Cunnington said. We want to be Antioch churches. All we do is nothing if we don’t have faithful shepherds, Cunnington said. We need to pray for each other and keep our eyes on Jesus.

Cunnington’s messages are available on the IBC YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/@ibcgermany](http://www.youtube.com/@ibcgermany).

In addition to Cunnington’s messages, participants could choose from a variety of seminars including Being a Church on Mission, Freedom in Christ, Reaching Muslims through International Churches, Reproducible Disciple-Making, How to Prevent or Recover from Burnout, Values in Action, Raising Third-Culture Kids, International Ministry: Living and Loving the Pilgrim Journey, Perceiving God’s Vision for Your Church, Prioritizing Relationships and Results, Developing Leaders: The IBC Residency Program and the Aquila Initiative, and a Church Planting Panel.

David Martin and Daniel Matzeit from IBC Cologne and Naomi Brown from ICF Oberursel led the worship in song times. Martin and Matzeit also led a concert of prayer time on Monday morning.

Ninety people from 25 churches attended the conference. On Saturday afternoon, everyone enjoyed a bus tour of Lisbon followed by a typical Fado dinner.



# Turning Your World Upside Down through Worship

When you ask some people about what they want to do with their lives, you sometimes get the response, “I want to change the world.” That’s quite a lofty goal. It’s almost as though anything less than changing the world would make one’s life less meaningful. But I think that what Christians are called to do with our lives does in fact change the world and turn it upside down.

Since the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden, the Bible tells us that God’s image in His creation has been marred by sin. Sin has turned our love for God and His glory into a love of ourselves and the pursuit of our own pleasure. So, even today, the world revolves around mankind’s pursuits and ambitions to make himself great and satisfy his own physical and emotional longings. Only the Gospel of Jesus Christ can change that.

The Gospel “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16). God saves us from His wrath. The condemnation is deserved for our sinful refusal to “honor him as God or give thanks to him” and for exchanging “the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal men” (Romans 1:21-23). Believing in His Son Jesus Christ not only saves us from God’s wrath but also frees us from sin to live for God’s glory, just as God intended.

Once we are “alive to God in Christ Jesus” the Spirit of God transforms us into worshippers of God. The worship of God is what we were meant for all along. The change within us is so profound that it affects our desires and our delights and conforms us into the image of Christ. Jesus said, “The hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him” (John 4:23).

So, the mission of the Church as the Body of Christ is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ so that there will be more worshippers of God. As John Piper is well-known for saying, “Worship is the goal and the fuel of missions: Missions exists because worship doesn’t.” Our proclamation of the Gospel isn’t the goal, nor is leading a person to salvation by placing their faith in Jesus Christ. Those are needed steps toward the goal of transforming a person into a worshipper of God.


It’s important to have the goal in mind whenever we set about our mission. If our goal is to proclaim the Gospel, we’ll count each opportunity that we took to explain “The 4 Spiritual Laws” as a win. If our goal is to get people to pray “The Sinner’s Prayer,” we’ll count such a prayer as a win. But our goal is to “make disciples” of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). We need to continue to teach people the truths of

God’s character, His will, and His ways, so that they learn how to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

One of my favorite expressions of worship to God is through songs and music. The delight of glorifying God and the experience of His presence is to me so real and satisfying when I lift my voice in melodies and harmonies. As long as the songs and melodies are well written, my mind becomes focused on the truth from Scripture, and my heart is filled with wonder, joy, gratitude, or peace. At times, my heart can quickly shift between those emotions as I get immersed in the experience. Sometimes, it even overflows in tears.

I know, worship can also be expressed through prayer, obedience, silence, and excellence at work. I worship God that way too. But as a musician and playing a musical instrument while “singing and making melody to the Lord” with my heart, I feel like my whole being is being used by God for His glory alone. And the worship of God is what my life is for. The experience is something I love to share with others, so my joy runs even deeper when I lead others through songs that are filled with God’s truth.

Only God can open sinful hearts to receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ, so we wait upon Him as we faithfully bear testimony of Jesus Christ. Only the Spirit of God can bring a person to repentance, so we pray for them in the hope that one day they will confess their sins and believe in Jesus Christ. But missions is all about the Father seeking worshippers who will worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. So, we should continue to pray for people to experience a transformation of heart, that they seek only to honor and glorify God with their lives.

If every person would go from being worshipper of self to being a worshipper of God, the world would indeed be a very different place. 



by N. Erik Nielsen,  
IBC President and Pastor,  
First International Baptist  
Church, Copenhagen,  
Denmark



Nielsen (r) loves to lead others in musical worship times.

photo by Nicole Horn

# Turning the World Upside Down – One or



by Darryl Evetts  
Multiplying Churches Core  
Strategy Director

First century disciples were accused of “*turning the world upside down!*” (Acts 17:6, ESV). I love it! I love a good “change-the-world” challenge! But I also have to admit, at times it sounds like an over-used theme from a high school graduation speech. Can one person really change the world? Can just a few people really change the world? Jesus did! The disciples did! For more than 2,000 years people’s worlds have been turned upside down (rather, set right side up) as they have discovered Jesus Christ and the life He offers them.

God invites us to join Him as He continues to turn people’s worlds upside down – from the very first, Jesus said to those He called to be disciples, “*Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men*” (Matthew 4:19, ESV) to His great commission He left us with before He ascended, “*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you*” (Matthew 28:19-20, ESV).

First, I believe it’s simply about obeying Jesus’ clear command.

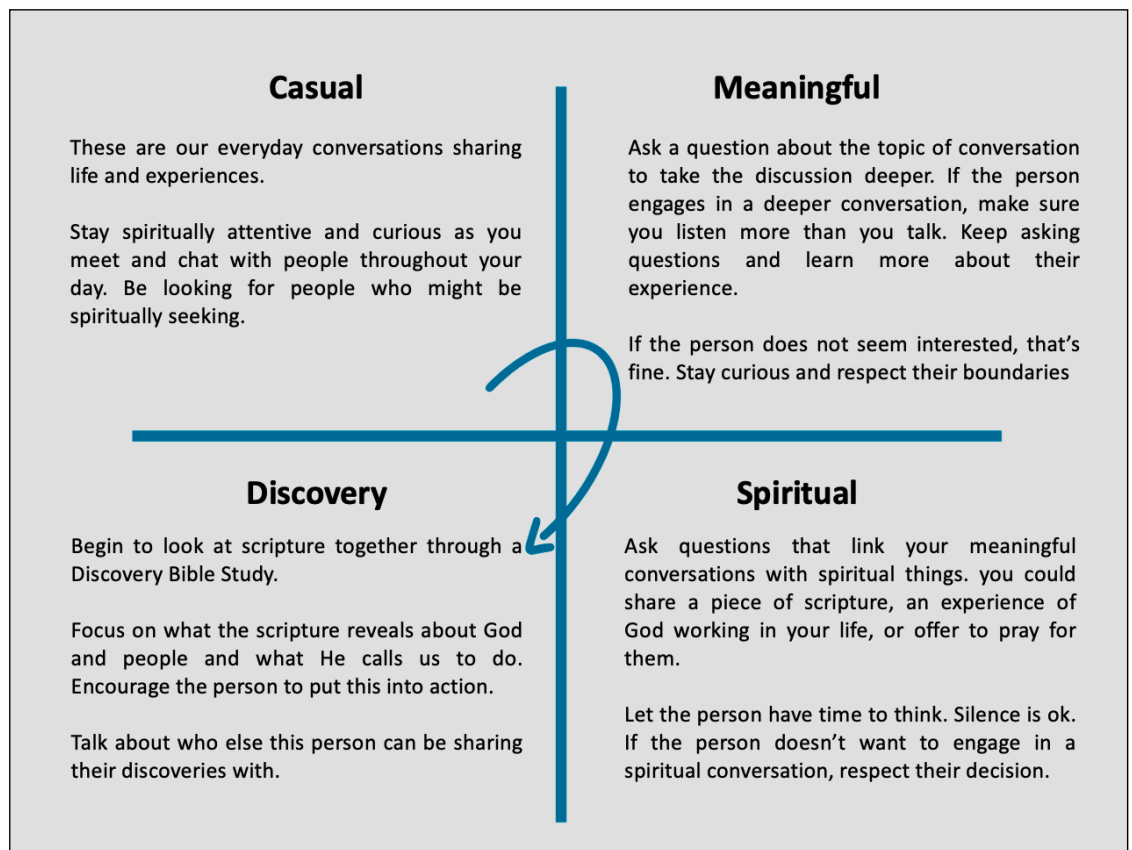
Second, I believe Jesus left us simple steps to follow. Our part is not easy, but I do believe it is much simpler than we make it out to be.

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

An important aspect of making disciples is finding them in the first place. We are often good at “casual” or “shallow” chit-chat, but our challenge is to take these conversations from casual to meaningful, from meaningful to spiritual, and from spiritual to discovery. This can be a bit intimidating, but if you approach your interactions with spiritual intent and genuine interest and love, you will meet people whom God is already in conversation with (drawing to Himself) and He will invite you to join the conversation.

A good example of this is found in John 4:4-26, when Jesus encounters the woman at the well. Here we see Jesus take the conversation with the woman from casual (needing a drink of water), to meaningful (talking about living water), to spiritual (springs of water welling up to eternal life). In each transition, Jesus used a statement or question to see if the woman was open to going deeper.

These statements led the woman to discover truth, to discover Jesus. Rather than Jesus telling the woman who He was and why she should follow Him, He engaged her in a spiritually intentional conversation that allowed her to discover Him for herself. Her world was turned upside down!





# Two People at a Time

Remember, it is God's role to prepare people's hearts to hear and respond to Him – it is simply our role (blessing!) to join Him in the conversation.

Conversation Quadrants is a tool I have found quite helpful. It is a simple framework to help us be more intentional in our conversations.

I had had plenty of casual conversations with my nephew. We enjoyed talking to each other and had lots of laughs. It was fairly easy to turn the conversations to meaningful as we talked about family and his young adult life experiences. When he shared with me his intentions to get married, it provided me the opportunity, with his permission, to share God's intention for marriage as well as the gospel. His rejection of the gospel was the most respectful and honest I'd ever encountered. (Most likely due to the relationship we had developed.) I invited him to leave the door open for possible future spiritual and discovery conversations.

About six months after I had shared the gospel with him, he reached out to me asking if I would get him started reading the Bible because he wanted to consider God further. We did Discovery Bible Study together through the Gospel of John... 21 weeks through 21 chapters. Then, without any prompting from me, he prayed confession of sin and thankfulness for God's love and Jesus' sacrifice. I asked him why he hadn't trusted Jesus months ago when I shared the gospel with him. He said he guessed he couldn't put his trust in someone he didn't know, but once he discovered for himself who Jesus was, he knew he could trust Him.

Now imagine God has led you to join in the conversation with one, two, maybe even three people who are interested in discovering who He is. Now what? What will you do when you sit down once a week with those you are leading to discover Jesus? Let me offer a simple approach to reproducible disciple-making.

## MAKE DISCIPLE MAKERS!

C.A.L.L.E.D. is a simple, reproducible, and transformational *process* for disciple making. It describes a flow for disciple-making conversations and emphasizes our role as equippers and disciplers. There's nothing new under the sun concerning the elements of this process but the way each element is arranged and work together for a transformational experience is quite remarkable.

The C. A. L. L. describe the flow of conversation during a regular meeting with the person or persons you're discipling through the discovery process.

- **C is for Celebrate.** Start with celebrating what the Lord has done in you, around you, or through you. *"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice"* (Philippians 4:4, ESV).
- **A is for Accountability.** The goal of accountability is to encourage the disciple(s) as they strive to be faithful to what they've heard the Lord tell them to obey. *"Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works"* (Hebrews 10:24, ESV).
- **L is for Learn it.** Use a Discovery Bible Study together, giving the Holy Spirit room to *"Teach you all things and... bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you"* (John 14:26, ESV). What a joy this part is! Taking time to discover what a passage of Scripture reveals about God and people and what it means.
- **L is for Live it.** This is where the disciple learns to be still and wait, listening to discern the Spirit's leading. This is the most important part of the process, so don't rush it. The disciple will listen to the Lord and write down what his or her faithful response to the passage will look like. *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me"* (John 10:27, ESV).

Each of these stops along the C.A.L.L. path of conversation presents wonderful times of prayer!

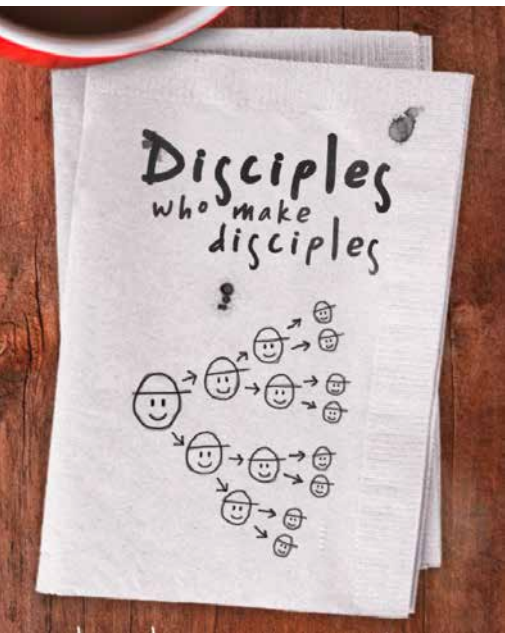
The E. and D. emphasize our role in the context of a genuine relationship with those we disciple.

- **E is for Equipper.** We want to equip others with experiences, skills, and tools for their journey with Jesus and their journey of discipling others.
- **D is for Disciple.** Our role as a disciple is to come alongside the other person(s) in a life-on-life relationship always encouraging them to become more like Jesus.

## NOW MULTIPLY THAT!

Maybe the most effective way to turn the world upside down is to multiply disciples, but I don't know if many Christians and churches are clear on what multiplication actually means. The difference between adding and multiplying disciples is like this: if you make disciples, that is addition. If you make disciples who make more disciples, that is multiplication.

Jesus made disciple-makers. He spent three years training 12 men, and then He commissioned them to go out and reproduce the process with others. Jesus' disciples started making more disciples who >>



>> made more disciples. Jesus started the Church to be a movement of multiplication so that the Church would grow exponentially as described in 2 Timothy, “What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2, ESV).

We need as many disciples as possible to start not only making, but multiplying, disciples. That means me! That means you! Here is the million-dollar question: Are you currently investing in a handful of disciples? If you're not, start investing in disciples and potential disciples around you.

We need as many churches as possible to be disciple-making churches. A church with a discipleship program is not necessarily the same as a disciple-making church. We need churches that are helping untrained seekers become fully trained disciples who go out into the world to multiply disciples.

Let's you and I accept God's invitation to join Him and turn our world upside down!

## Doing Our Part in a World Turned Upside Down

The IBC's 2022 Global Missions Offering received €10,238.28 from six churches plus an offering at the ACM to help do our part in reaching the nations on three different continents – South America, Africa, and Europe.

Thirty percent of the money will go towards our partnership with the European Baptist Missions International project in Brazil. Valério and Sandra Kurth are broadcasting messages of hope to Pomeranians living in Brazil through radio and social media. Pomeranians live in a bleak, mountainous area of Brazil, suffering from great poverty. Many speak only the Pomeranian dialect and are heavily influenced by superstition.

Forty percent of the offering will go to minister to the poor in South Africa and the Kingdom of Lesotho through the work that North Sea Baptist Church, Stavanger, Norway, has been doing. The money from this year's GMO will be used to install electricity and purchase a stove and refrigerator and provide support for the first year of ministry of a multipurpose center in Lesotho. Ministries include a soup kitchen; medical supply, clothing, shoe, and Bible distribution; leadership training; youth outreach; and food parcel distributions.

The final 30% of the money will go to assist IBC Bucharest in their ongoing ministry to Ukraine and Moldova and to support evangelistic outreach to the Nepalese community in Bucharest.

## Kirby is New Strengthening Churches CSD

Brian Kirby was elected as the new Strengthening Churches Core Strategy Director at a special business meeting, held 20 March during the IBC's Ministry Leadership Conference in Lisbon, Portugal. Brian will be taking over from Dan Maxton who has filled the role for the past two years. Brian has had a long history with the IBC and is well known by many. His involvement and love for the IBC began in 1993 as he served at Emmanuel International Church in Paris as youth minister. He returned to EIC and Paris from 2003-2010 as the senior pastor. 2014 brought him back to Europe; this time to work with the IBC for three years in planting Rome International Church. Over the years, he has served in the IBC leadership through a variety of roles, including the youth team and Euroventure.

In addition to his years with IBC churches, Brian has been involved in numerous schools, churches and ministries. Since 2018, he has been on the pastoral leadership team at Community Church in Ashburn, Virginia, in a variety of roles that has made use of his gifts and talents.

Brian and his wife Denise recently relocated to Berlin, Germany, and the day before the meeting he was called to be the pastor at IBC Berlin. Brian is passionate about the IBC fulfilling its vision and mission of strengthening the churches of the Convention and welcomes the opportunity to be a core strategy director.



photo by Nicole Horn

Brian Kirby

## Eindhoven, The Netherlands

### IBC EINDHOVEN CELEBRATES 35 YEARS

Established in January 1988, the International Baptist Church, Eindhoven, The Netherlands, has always been a friendly, welcoming, and loving church, with all its members being close bonded like one big family. Having been a part of this church from the very beginning, it has been a blessing and privilege to serve the Lord in this church. Being an interna-

tional church, we have seen many people come and go, but they all maintain a close connection with the church even from afar.

Through the last 35 years, we have seen the highs and lows that came along with the growth of this church, but one thing that always remained is the love of Christ! We believe that this church's development can progress through consistency in trying to better it with patience through ev-

ery step. We are thanking and praising the Lord for His goodness towards His people. *"Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 1:6).

Happy 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary IBC Eindhoven!

*Huub and Annie Beeren*

## Oberursel, Germany

THE LIVES OF REFUGEES from the Middle East have already been turned upside down physically and emotionally. Many days we are trying to help turn their lives right side up from their trauma to a new culture. God has recently reminded me as I look through pictures of deceased family members from the earthquake and hear stories of sexual assault, family abuse, the dangerous way they arrived in Germany, and other seemingly hopeless stories that it's about washing their feet because Jesus has washed mine. That's how we see their spiritual world turn upside down and toward Jesus. And it takes many washings (for myself especially!).

One lady began coming to different programs we have done or sent her son to, such as our Football Camp, Family Fun Day at the church, and Christmas Party, and was open for my personal visits. Beginning encounters were difficult because of trauma and negativity. Yet she would sometimes volunteer and became open more to my crazy talk about Jesus and



Photo by Anemone123 from Pixabay

prayers to Jesus. We have begun to see her spiritual world turning for she said yes to reading the Bible. When asked if she has ever read the Bible, she said her neighbor gave it to her once and said she had two days to return it! Well, I do not know the whole story of that, but I gave her a Bible that she can keep now. And as we read about Adam and Eve, we saw how

God provided and still provides and covers our shame from the grief and sins of life and why there is so much trauma in this world. We hope that one day her entire family will turn to Jesus as we continue to learn how to wash feet as Jesus washes ours.

*Laura Meller,  
Serving the City Mission Leader*

## Sao Paulo, Brazil



EXCITING NEWS for Calvary International Church of Sao Paulo, Brazil – Pastor Seth Barkley has accepted the call to serve as the full-time lead pastor. Seth, together with his wife Kathleen and their three little boys, will be coming to Sao Paulo from Gastonia, North Carolina where Seth is currently the senior pastor at Chapel Grove Baptist Church. Seth has

a Master of Arts in Church Planting from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. They have served internationally in the countries of Greece, Turkey, and India.

*Brian Zuercher, Pastoral Search Team*

## Stuttgart, Germany

MATTHEW 25:31-40 is very clear about how we are to respond to the needs of the poor and destitute among us. At the International Baptist Church, Stuttgart, Germany, we are engaged in service to the needy in our community through ministry and outreach efforts.

Every Saturday since October 2022, members of Fusion, our young adults ministry, volunteer with the German chapter of the Salvation Army in an operation called Project 25. They minister to the homeless members of our local community by providing for physical and prayer needs and serving meals, as well as playing music and singing to lift up their spirits.

Fusion realized the impact they were having was something that the rest of our church body could also participate in. So they connected with our Hospitality Ministry to collaborate on a first-ever church-wide service opportunity over Thanksgiving and Christmas 2022.

More than 100 members of IBC Stuttgart assembled to prepare, package, and deliver nearly 150 meals and donations of gloves, hats, scarves, and socks over the winter holiday period to support the homeless. Church leadership identified the need to make this a consistent, quarterly outreach event with the Salvation Army for all of the church body to participate in. Donations are now rolling in every week, and the Fusion team and Hospitality Ministry are working on a strategy of how to effectively organize this growing multi-ministry outreach.



IBC Stuttgart members ministering to the homeless in their city.

Additionally, another group of church members have assembled in response to the homeless in our community. A four-member team meets weekly to walk down the Königstrasse in central Stuttgart and through areas of nearby Bad Cannstatt, where the homeless frequently congregate. During the walks, they distribute sandwiches, butter pretzels, and hot tea and coffee. These items provide comfort, demonstrate care and kindness, and meet an immediate physical need in accordance with Christ's instruction.

While homeless members of the local community often present multiple limitations and issues that contribute to their ability to secure food and shelter, there is a light and hope in the darkness.

At the Christoph-Ulrich-Hahn-Haus in Stuttgart, a total of 70 homeless men and

women – most of whom suffer from substance addiction or other illnesses – find a refuge and hope in rehabilitation. Thanks to some dedicated members of IBC Stuttgart, each Wednesday evening the residents of this shelter can also connect with the gospel over some coffee and cake. Our “Hahnhaus” outreach has been going on for several years, and currently the Alpha Course is being provided to residents who want to know who Jesus is and discover what they can about the foundations of our faith.

This outreach effort and the other endeavors that our church members are engaged with continue to plant seeds of faith and hope to members of the local community with the greatest needs. To God be the glory!

*Marcy Shelly*

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Join us as we celebrate the 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the IBC!

23-25 October  
IBC Stuttgart

