

## **Church Genome Project**

*Be a Missional Culture Change Agent for Christ*

### **Spiritual DNA Individual/Small Group Guides**

(Ten Week Missional Revival Season)

## **Principle 1: Spiritual Preparation: Pray, Wait and Expect God to Work**

Commit to the Father's work of spiritual preparation in your life and the life of your church.

Read Acts 1:1-26

### **Becoming a Missional Change Agent for Christ**

*For Small Group Discussion and Individual Application:*

#### **Model the DNA of Jesus—Spiritual Preparation**

Jesus modeled the spiritual DNA of preparation. His life was dedicated to the Father's work of making him ready for the mission of redemption. The three years of his ministry were invested in discipling others who would be sent on his mission to make disciples from all nations. The best example of this is in the missionary discourses of Matthew 10, Luke 10:1-24 and Mark 6:7-13 which highlight all ten spiritual DNA principles. He clearly taught them how to be on mission and the book of Acts showed it.

How has Jesus been preparing you for his mission?

#### **Address Genetic Mutations of Spiritual Preparation**

The mutation of spiritual preparation is evidenced through a need to hurry up and just do something mentality. Religious activities and busyness are more valued than taking the time to pray and wait on God for specific direction. Likewise, in mutated form the kingdom may be thought of as simply working with other denominations or another component in a grand eschatological (last days) scenario. Disunity abounds where DNA mutations are present.

When have you experienced true spiritual DNA expressions such as unity, kingdom focus, and/or specific direction from God like they did in Acts?

#### **Learn Spiritual Preparation from Great Awakenings**

The First Great Awakening in 1734-1770 was marked by prayer and a great harvest of souls coming to Christ. In fact, every historical awakening can be traced to a praying people. Jonathan Edwards was a pastor mightily used by God during this time. He called for an "explicit agreement and visible union of the people of God in extraordinary prayer for revival of religion and the advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth."<sup>1</sup>

What would it take for you and your church to be described as having an extraordinary prayer life, visibly unified and kingdom focused?

#### **Learn Spiritual Preparation from Entrepreneurs**

Even the business world gets it. Henry Ford said, "Before everything else, getting ready is the secret to success."<sup>2</sup> Millions of hours and dollars are invested in strategic planning for business success. An entrepreneur would not start something new without a well thought out business plan.

Are there positive examples from the business world of preparation that can be transferred to church life? Discuss what that might look like?

### **Practice the Cultural Change Factors in Your Life**

This Coming Week (Times of Refreshing)

#### **Action Items: Seven Cultural Change Factors**

1. Dedicate the time to God for this *Church Genome Project* season.
2. Pray through the ACTS Prayer Guide with at least 2 other believers.
3. Read Acts 1-2 from Acts Reading Guide and trace the Spiritual Preparation DNA Thread throughout Acts.
4. Listen to the sermon on Spiritual Preparation.
5. Plan to attend your small group and hold each other accountable for SDNA study.
6. Experience the Missionary Activity on Spiritual Preparation—Prayer Walking.
7. Lead others by finding one person, to share what you've learned this week about Spiritual Preparation and ask someone else in your group to share with you what they learned about Spiritual Preparation.

## **Principle 2: Spiritual Authority: Rely on the Power of the Holy Spirit**

Continuously receive and rely on the Holy Spirit, the Father's promise of spiritual authority in your life and the life of your church.

Read Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-47

### **Becoming a Missional Change Agent for Christ**

*For Small Group Discussion and Individual Application:*

#### **Model the DNA of Jesus—Spiritual Authority**

Jesus modeled the spiritual DNA of authority. He lived a Holy Spirit-reliant life. Unlike the religious leaders of the day, he spoke with authority (Matthew 7:51). In the synagogue, he boldly read the Messianic prophecy in Isaiah. It began with the words, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me..." (Luke 4:17-19). He went on to say that today this Scripture was fulfilled in him. After the resurrection, Jesus commissioned his disciples by breathing the Holy Spirit upon them and saying, "As the Father has sent me, even so have I sent you (John 20:21). Before ascending to heaven, Jesus announced the promised power of the Holy Spirit who would come upon them to be his gospel witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, even to the ends of the earth.

How is Jesus's authority in your life demonstrated today?

#### **Address Genetic Mutations of Spiritual Authority**

If this mutation is present, you will see a reliance on personalities and programs instead of reliance on the Holy Spirit. Spiritually authorized people imitate Jesus and willingly obey his orders. For the mutated, submission and accountability are negative or outdated concepts. But worst of all, the mission suffers because witnessing is non-existent or at best sparse.

What does the spiritual DNA of authority look like in the book of Acts? Can you share an example?

#### **Learn Spiritual Authority from Great Awakenings**

It was during the Second Great Awakening (1787-1843) that God used a new breed of leader, the frontier preacher, to expand the kingdom of God. Most of these men were unassuming farmer preachers. They did not find their spiritual authority in their education, eloquence or pedigree but upon the Word of God and a reliance upon the Holy Spirit. Their theme was captured in the words of the prophet Zechariah, "...not by might, nor by power but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty" (Zechariah 4:6 KJV). None were household names. However, God in heaven knows their names and missional influence for him during those days of national revival.

Have you ever entertained the thought that God could still use you even though you're not famous or possess a theology degree? Do you agree or disagree?

## **Learn Spiritual Authority from Entrepreneurs**

Even the business world gets it. In corporate life, authority tends to flow from position but now people are understanding that real authority flows out of healthy relationships. The idea of market branding is all about delivering on a promised service or product. A company that delivers on its promise reflects authority with the customer and potential new customers. They enter the marketplace with powerful authority and consequently success along the way.

How has God branded the church and his Christ followers? Since, the Holy Spirit always delivers on his promise...how does spiritual authority flow out of a healthy relationship with God?

## **Practice the Cultural Change Factors in Your Life**

This Coming Week (Times of Refreshing)

### **Action Items: Seven Cultural Change Factors**

1. Dedicate the time to God for the *Church Genome Project season*
2. Pray through the ACTS Prayer Guide with at least 2 other believers.
3. Read Acts 3-4 from Acts Reading Guide and trace the Spiritual Preparation DNA Thread throughout Acts.
4. Listen to the sermon on Spiritual Authority.
5. Plan to attend your small group and hold each other accountable for SDNA study.
6. Experience the Acts Missionary Activity on Spiritual Authority—Sharing Jesus.
7. Lead others by finding one person, to share what you've learned this week about Spiritual Authority and ask someone else in your group to share with you what they learned about Spiritual Authority.

### **Principle 3: Spiritual Understanding: Focus on Peoples and Places**

Follow God's lead to the people and places he wants you and your church to engage.

Read Acts 10:1-48

### **Becoming a Missional Change Agent for Christ**

*For Small Group Discussion and Individual Application:*

#### **Model the DNA of Jesus—Spiritual Understanding**

Jesus modeled the spiritual DNA of understanding. He focused on peoples and places in need of the gospel. The next village was always in his sights. He saw the multitudes and was moved with compassion because they were helpless and scattered sheep in need of a Shepherd (Matthew 9:35-38). He came as a light to the Jews first, then also to the Gentiles. He reached out to Samaritans. He shared the hope of the gospel with the religious and irreligious. He ministered to the rich and poor alike. There was no prejudice in his actions; the blind, the deaf, lame and the demon possessed all found healing and deliverance by the power of Jesus.

As you follow Jesus, how may he be leading you to a particular place or people group?

#### **Address Genetic Mutations of Spiritual Understanding**

Prejudice is the word. A believer or church possesses this mutation when they are closed to anyone who is not like them. This takes the form of a subtle favoritism and in other cases as an outright hostility toward the objects of their prejudice. It can be motivated by race, socio-economics, religion, politics, generations, geography and culture. God loves all people and desires for all to be in relationship with him through Christ.

What does the spiritual DNA of understanding look like in the book of Acts? Can you share an example?

#### **Learn Spiritual Understanding from Great Awakenings**

It was during the First Great Awakening (1734-1770) that a man by the name of David Barnard was burdened for the Indians in the Americas. God revealed to him their need for the gospel. God worked in amazing ways through his chosen instrument. He faced danger and battled sickness to take the gospel to people who were not like him. It was because he saw pockets of people who needed to be reached for Christ. David's desire, dedication and discipline has inspired countless missionaries through the years.<sup>3</sup>

Have you ever asked God to lead you to an unreached pocket of people? Can you share how God used you?

#### **Learn Spiritual Understanding from Entrepreneurs**

Even the business world gets it—to a point. Business leaders talk about the importance of having a vision and being able to assess current realities that can move the organization on a path to a preferred future. They have a keen ability to see things that others don't see and help others move in the right direction. With spiritual understanding, God reveals his will to his servants. He is the one setting the agenda for where he is taking the church. He is at work dealing with prejudices. The spiritual leader uses God's Word, counsel of other believers, spiritual disciplines and last but not least a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit to discern the realities and make adjustments. As seen in Acts, he sometimes uses a literal vision like he did with Peter on the rooftop. The church could learn much from the business arena regarding a vision to reach all people.

How is vision from a business perspective different than a revelation from God?

### **Practice the Seven Cultural Change Factors in Your Life**

This Coming Week (Times of Refreshing)

#### **Action Items: Seven Cultural Change Factors**

1. Dedicate the time to God for the *Church Genome Project season*
2. Pray through the ACTS Prayer Guide with at least 2 other believers.
3. Read Acts 5-6 from Acts Reading Guide and the Spiritual Preparation DNA Thread Throughout Acts.
4. Listen to the sermon on Spiritual Understanding.
5. Plan to attend your small group and hold each other accountable for SDNA study.
6. Experience the Acts Missionary Activity on Spiritual Understanding—Visit Ethnic Grocery Store or Restaurant.
7. Lead others by finding one person, to share what you've learned this week about Spiritual Understanding and ask someone else in your group to share with you what they learned about Spiritual Understanding.

## **Principle 4: Spiritual Leadership: Identify and Nurture Missional Leaders**

Invest in identifying and nurturing missional leaders in your life and the life of your church.

Read Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-5

### **Becoming a Missional Change Agent for Christ**

*For Small Group Discussion and Individual Application:*

#### **Model the DNA of Jesus—Spiritual Leadership**

Jesus modeled the spiritual DNA of leadership. A leader has followers, and Jesus called disciples to follow him. These disciples were humble learners. He led by serving with the towel and basin as he willingly washed the feet of his disciples. He led by his love, character and integrity. He was obedient to his Father and sacrificial in his leadership all the way to the cross. He prayed in the garden to the Father, "...not my will be your will be done." His personal will was lost in the will of his Master.

Jesus led by serving, how do you exhibit this trait in your leadership?

#### **Address Genetic Mutations of Spiritual Leadership**

This kind of mutation is reflected by a selfish style of leadership. People choose to become insulated from any sense of accountability. They tend to be autocratic and devoid of character. The other side of the mutation is seen in a withdrawal and an abdication of the leadership mantle to others. Fear of man becomes the major motivator for decisions. They don't see their role as empowering or developing more leaders yet see others as objects of manipulation.

What does the spiritual DNA of leadership look like in the Book of Acts? Can you share an example?

#### **Learn Spiritual Leadership from Great Awakenings**

On the heels of the First Great Awakening, God raised up a spiritual leader in the person of Shubal Stearns. He was the pastor of Sandy Creek Baptist Church which was established in 1755. It became a beachhead for planting new churches. Historians have noted that the church became a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother to 42 churches out of which came 125 ministers.<sup>4</sup> In a spiritual awakening, God chooses to use men like Shubal with a heart and a plan to multiply leaders from within their church. This action in turn can result in a multiplying movement of new churches. Antioch identified and nurtured leaders to be sent on mission and likewise, it was true of Sandy Creek Baptist Church.

Where do you believe the next generation of leaders are now? What would a plan for identifying and nurturing spiritual leaders from within your church look like?

#### **Learn Spiritual Leadership from Entrepreneurs**



Even the business world gets it. Leaders like John Collins, in his book *Good to Great*, advocate for what he calls Level 5 leaders who are described as possessing a unique blend of fearlessness and humility.<sup>5</sup> Consider Robert Greenleaf who wrote, “The Servant-Leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant first to make sure that the other people’s highest priority needs are being served.”<sup>6</sup> Both these business world examples sound a lot like Jesus who said that the one who will lead must be willing first to serve (Matthew 20:25-28).

In what ways are spiritual leadership different from business leadership? How are they similar?

### **Practice the Culture Change Factors in Your Life**

This Coming Week (Times of Refreshing)

#### **Action Items: Seven Cultural Change Factors**

1. Dedicate the time to God for the *Church Genome Project season*
2. Pray through the ACTS Prayer Guide with at least 2 other believers.
3. Read Acts 7-8 from Acts Reading Guide and trace the Spiritual Preparation DNA Thread throughout Acts.
4. Listen to the sermon on Spiritual Leadership.
5. Plan to attend your small group and hold each other accountable for SDNA study.
6. Experience the Acts Missionary Activity on Spiritual Leadership—Identify Potential Leaders.
7. Lead others by finding one person, to share what you’ve learned this week about Spiritual Leadership and ask someone else in your group to share with you what they learned about Spiritual Leadership.

## **Principle 5: Spiritual Synergy: Work Together for Greater Impact**

Choose to work together as a synergistic team in your life and the life of your church.

Read Acts 16:6-11

### **Becoming a Missional Change Agent for Christ**

*For Small Group Discussion and Individual Application:*

#### **Model the DNA of Jesus—Spiritual Synergy**

Jesus modeled the spiritual DNA of synergy. Knowing the importance of team, Jesus prayed all night as he selected the twelve. He called them to be with him (Mark 3:13-18). Jesus had an inner circle of team—Peter, James and John. These men experienced significant events in his life. Jesus sent the 72 out in teams of 2 as they went into the mission fields. The Triune God (himself) illustrates team in its purest form—the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit in oneness.

The disciples as a team, how did they complement one another and produce synergy?

#### **Address Genetic Mutations of Spiritual Synergy**

The mutation of synergy is evidenced by a lack of common purpose reflected in disunity and isolation. There is misalignment with people assuming roles that are not the best fit for them and in reality, not the most effective for the mission as a whole. Indecisiveness is a prominent characteristic of a team lacking synergy. They just can't seem to get off center. Instead of becoming stronger and able to accomplish more together this mutated version is practically immobilized and anemic in their influence.

What does the spiritual DNA of synergy look like in the book of Acts? Can you share an example?

#### **Learn Spiritual Synergy from Great Awakenings**

An example of teamwork and synergy from the First Great Awakening was that of George Whitefield and Gilbert Tennent. They were allies working together and through their partnership touched thousands for Christ. Whitefield came as a missionary to Georgia and preached through all the middle colonies. Gilbert was known for his passionate preaching and establishing a center called the Log College to train future leaders.<sup>7</sup> God used them to do more together than either one of them could have ever done separately. It was all about God receiving all the credit.

How have the teams that you've been a part of given God the credit?

#### **Learn Spiritual Synergy from Entrepreneurs**

Even the business world gets it. Teamwork is essential in the marketplace because collaboration is the standard for effective business practices and strategy. The T.E.A.M. acronym "Together Everyone Accomplishes More" has become the norm in healthy work environments. Stephen Covey describes creative synergy as a core habit of highly effective people. He writes, "Once

people have experienced real synergy, they are never quite the same again. They know the possibility of having other such mind-expanding adventures in the future.”<sup>8</sup>

In your teams at church, what role does the Holy Spirit play to achieving spiritual synergy?

### **Practice the Cultural Change Factors in Your Life**

This Coming Week (Times of Refreshing)

#### **Action Items: Seven Cultural Change Factors**

1. Dedicate the time to God for the *Church Genome Project* season
2. Pray through the ACTS Prayer Guide with at least 2 other believers.
3. Read Acts 9-10 from Acts Reading Guide and trace the Spiritual Synergy DNA Thread throughout Acts.
4. Listen to the sermon on Spiritual Synergy.
5. Plan to attend your small group and hold each other accountable for SDNA study.
6. Experience the Acts Missionary Activity on Spiritual Synergy—Power of Team Formation.
7. Lead others by finding one person, to share what you’ve learned this week about Spiritual Synergy and ask someone else in your group to share with you what they learned about Spiritual Synergy.

## **Principle 6: Spiritual Receptivity: Discover Persons of Peace**

Commit to seek after and engage persons of peace as you express the missionary DNA of spiritual receptivity in your life and the life of your church.

Read Acts 16:12-34

### **Becoming a Missional Change Agent for Christ**

*For Small Group Discussion and Individual Application:*

#### **Model the DNA of Jesus—Spiritual Receptivity**

Jesus modeled the spiritual DNA of receptivity. He taught the principle in his special instructions to those disciples that he sent out on mission (Matthew 10:11-15; Mark 10-11; Luke 10:5-16). The person of peace from Christ's ministry that stands out the most is the woman at the well. She was a great example of what God can do through an individual to influence a whole city for Christ (John 4). Making the most of receptive peoples and places was the strategic way Jesus did mission. One person of peace could influence entire relational networks for the sake of gospel.

How would you know that someone is a person of peace? What are the indicators?

#### **Address Genetic Mutations of Spiritual Receptivity**

The mutation of this principle is not about an outright rejection of the message because we know Jesus's instructions were clear...he said to move onto the next person or village if they won't receive you. Though the mutation can best be captured with the idea of a misplaced confidence in methods rather than, sound biblical practices. It's really reflected by trying to working harder and not necessarily smarter. To the mutated, these persons of peace would be incorrectly perceived as insignificant and not worthy of the investment by these who want to touch the masses for their own benefit.

What does the spiritual DNA of receptivity look like in the book of Acts? Can you share an example?

#### **Learn Spiritual Receptivity from Great Awakenings**

During the First Great Awakening (1734-1770), John Wesley was powerfully used by God through this biblical method of finding receptive peoples and places. He and his gospel coworkers were called Methodists. The circuit rider preachers would enter a community find someone who would express hospitality (person of peace) and then, through the new relationships...they soon created another preaching station. The preacher would also initiate a class meeting led by a capable layman. After a season of this ministry, the natural progression and fruit was that these class meetings became new churches.<sup>9</sup>

Can you describe what it must have been like to be involved in helping to establish a church?

#### **Learn Spiritual Receptivity from Entrepreneurs**

Even the business world gets it. Word of mouth is always the best advertisement. With the advent of Facebook and Twitter, people are using it to get their message out through relational networks. Customer referral is the aim. There is a point when something becomes “viral” which is exactly what occurs when a person of peace begins to unlock the power of their connections. In business and missions, the connecting of the dots makes all the difference—the gospel does have the same potential to be spread through all kinds of natural networks. It’s continues to be a good strategy.

In your outreach strategies, how does the gospel travel best? Is there a danger to avoid when tapping into relational networks?

### **Practice the Cultural Change Factors in Your Life**

This Coming Week (Times of Refreshing)

#### **Action Items: Seven Cultural Change Factors**

1. Dedicate the time to God for this *Church Genome Project season*.
2. Pray through the ACTS Prayer Guide with at least 2 other believers.
3. Read Acts 10-12 from Acts Reading Guide and the Spiritual Receptivity DNA Thread throughout Acts.
4. Listen to the sermon on Spiritual Receptivity.
5. Plan to attend your small group and hold each other accountable for SDNA study.
6. Experience the Missionary Activity on Spiritual Receptivity—Discover a Person of Peace.
7. Lead others by finding one person, to share what you’ve learned this week about Spiritual Receptivity and ask someone else in your group to share with you what they learned about Spiritual Receptivity.

## **Principle 7: Spiritual Sowing: Evangelize and Make Disciples**

Commit to intentionally evangelize and make disciples expressing the missionary DNA of spiritual sowing in your life and the life of your church.

Read Acts 17:1-14

### **Becoming a Missional Change Agent for Christ**

*For Small Group Discussion and Individual Application:*

#### **Model the DNA of Jesus—Spiritual Sowing**

Jesus modeled the spiritual DNA of receptivity. He taught and preached this simple principle at every turn. Jesus, who himself is the Good News, was all about proclaiming the hope of the gospel to all people—evangelizing. He intentionally discovered and developed humble learners who followed him—disciple making. He perfectly knew how to reason, explain, prove, proclaimed and persuade from the Scriptures. His parables were about spiritual sowing. In fact, the parable of the sower and the soils revealed our need to abundantly sow the seed of the Word of God leaving the results to God. Jesus was always looking for an opportunity to share the Word of God in every way planting life-giving seeds everywhere he traveled.

How often do you work the Scriptures (sow) into a conversation with unbelievers?

#### **Address Genetic Mutations of Spiritual Sowing**

The mutation is associated with a low view of Holy Scriptures and in some cases a full neglect of them. In mutated churches, evangelism and disciple making are treated as polar opposites and non-complementary. The tendency is to drift from evangelism and discipleship. The sowing of the gospel seed becomes a secondary task, religious duty or program. Words like argumentative and disrespectful might describe the evangelism of this kind of church. In their version of discipleship, control and command are the norm. It borders on cloning. People strive for the deeper life so deep there is no vision. They are filled with spiritual pride. There is no regard for the lost when this mutation is present.

What does the spiritual DNA of sowing look like in the book of Acts? Can you share an example?

#### **Learn Spiritual Sowing from Great Awakenings**

God called Henry Blackaby to be the pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Incredibly, God worked through this small church to help start 38 new churches in the region during his 12 year tenure of his ministry there.<sup>10</sup> The strong move of God's Spirit began in that little church with a passionate heart to introduce the lost to Christ. Henry advocated Jesus's way of gospel sowing through watching to see where the Father was already at work and joining him. He taught that a clear indicator of God's activity in a lost person's life is when they ask spiritual questions. It is God's invitation to share the gospel and make a new disciple. Henry wrote his

first book while there, and later another one entitled *Experiencing God* that literally has had worldwide influence helping multitudes to know God and follow his will in their lives.

When you share the gospel with someone, how have you observed the Holy Spirit's activity?

### **Learn Spiritual Sowing from Entrepreneurs**

Even the business world gets it. Sales people understand the importance of working the prospects. They make a presentation and then close the deal. Testimonials and product recommendations can persuade a buyer. Brian Tracy, business guru, writing about sales exhorts, "In selling no matter what the product, the only three activities that will pay your desired hourly rate are prospecting, presenting and closing. Only when you are engaged in these core activities are you actually working."<sup>11</sup> If you insert the words, sowing the gospel or engaging in evangelism, it makes perfect sense. As followers of Christ, we don't sell a product but there is a responsibility to sow the gospel. The reward is eternal and if you sow in tears, you'll reap with joy (Psalm 126:5)

In your evangelism efforts, is there anything that believers can learn from people involved in sales? What are the major differences and similarities?

### **Practice the Cultural Change Factors in Your Life**

This Coming Week (Times of Refreshing)

#### **Action Items: Seven Cultural Change Factors**

1. Dedicate the time to God for this *Church Genome Project* season.
2. Pray through the ACTS Prayer Guide with at least 2 other believers.
3. Read from Acts 13-14 Reading Guide and trace the Spiritual Sowing DNA Thread throughout Acts.
4. Listen to the sermon on Spiritual Sowing.
5. Plan to attend your small group and hold each other accountable for SDNA study.
6. Experience the Missionary Activity on Spiritual Sowing—Bible Distribution.
7. Lead others by finding one person, to share what you've learned this week about Spiritual Sowing and ask someone else in your group to share with you what they learned about Spiritual Sowing.

## **Principle 8: Spiritual Bridges: Leverage Points of Connection**

Look for the points of connection in your culture and express the spiritual bridges missionary DNA in your life and the life of your church.

Read Acts 17:15-34

### **Becoming a Missional Change Agent for Christ**

*For Small Group Discussion and Individual Application:*

#### **Model the DNA of Jesus—Spiritual Bridges**

Jesus modeled the spiritual DNA of bridges. The incarnation of Christ coming to this world becoming flesh is the supreme demonstration of engaging a culture (John 1:17). He was a friend of sinners and yet without sin. Jesus spoke of the importance of his disciples not being removed from this world but for his and the gospel's sake to remain in the world. He came to the sick—the spiritually sick—who desperately need the Great Physician's healing touch. His teaching method was to use everyday objects, stories, and events as bridges for communicating the kingdom truths. Jesus's sacrificial death on Calvary's cross is the ultimate bridge for eternal life.

Describe an example of Jesus leveraging a spiritual bridge in his culture for the gospel?

#### **Address Genetic Mutations of Spiritual Bridges**

The mutation of spiritual bridges has two distinct sides to it. The first is seen in an attempt to be so engaged or culturally relevant that the culture is fully embraced with all its sinful elements. The church with this mutation is much more concerned with the world's approval than seeking God's approval. The other side of this mutation is most often seen as an attempt to be so disconnected or separated from the culture that there's little to no engagement for the sake of the gospel. It can be shrouded in the idea of being biblically fundamental. Likewise, the church with this expression of the mutation can have a false sense of doing what God desires while totally missing the mission of Christ to reach the world with the gospel.

What does the spiritual DNA of bridges look like in the book of Acts? Can you share an example?

#### **Learn Spiritual Bridges from Great Awakenings**

The Layman's Prayer Revival occurred in the timeframe of 1857-1859. God used a business man, Jeremiah Lanphier, to initiate a prayer meeting in Manhattan on Fulton Street. The first one was held on September 23, 1857 at noon. At first, the response was weak. However, it began as a weekly prayer time, and then turned into a daily prayer time. Similar meetings cropped up all over New York and then God spread them as far as the Midwest. He engaged the culture of the marketplace as a bridge for the gospel.<sup>12</sup>

Another noteworthy awakening was called the Jesus' Movement. It began in the late 1960's and ended in the early 1970's. The music and the "hippie" culture were the major bridges that God



used to touch the young people of that day with the gospel. The “hippies” were not welcomed in most churches and consequently, the movement was short lived as well but its affects are still felt today. The reality is that God moves and uses unlikely bridges to cross cultures and remove barriers to the gospel.<sup>13</sup>

Discuss the bridges in these two stories? What attitudes do you think led to the short-lived nature of both awakenings?

### **Learn Spiritual Bridges from Entrepreneurs**

Even the business world gets it. Marketing, at its core, is knowing and understanding your customers. Its purpose is that of meeting a need (real, felt or perceived) or delivering a service. Communication and cross-cultural skills are essential to success. The target audience’s worldview is considered in the design of the advertising for a product. Bridges are constructed based on worldview. Perhaps, the most important question asked by any business would be “Who is the customer?” and in reality, a customer is someone you serve. For the Christ follower, God has called us to serve others.

What are the differences and the similarities of building a bridge for the gospel and marketing? What can the church learn?

### **Practice the Seven Cultural Change Factors in Your Life**

This Coming Week (Times of Refreshing)

#### **Action Items: Seven Cultural Change Factors**

1. Dedicate the time to God for this Church Genome Project season.
2. Pray through the ACTS Prayer Guide with at least 2 other believers.
3. Read Acts 15-16 from Acts Reading Guide and trace the Spiritual Preparation DNA Thread throughout Acts.
4. Listen to the sermon on Spiritual Bridges.
5. Plan to attend your small group and hold each other accountable for SDNA study.
6. Experience the Missionary Activity on Spiritual Bridges—A Shopping Trip to Observe the Idols.
7. Lead others by finding one person, to share what you’ve learned this week about Spiritual Bridges and ask someone else in your group to share with you what they learned about Spiritual Bridges.

## **Principle 9: Spiritual Giftedness: Gather and Give Resources from the Harvest**

Commit to sharing the resources God has given you through expressing the missionary DNA of spiritual giftedness in your life and the life of your church.

Read Acts 18:1-11

### **Becoming a Missional Change Agent for Christ**

*For Small Group Discussion and Individual Application:*

#### **Model the DNA of Jesus—Spiritual Giftedness**

Jesus modeled the spiritual DNA of giftedness. Jesus is the one who ascended so that the spiritual gifts could come down to his people through the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4). Christ identified the untapped potential of fisherman, tax collectors, and prostitutes, along with countless others. A little boy gave his lunch, Jesus multiplied it to feed the multitudes. He demonstrated the principle that the resources were in the harvest. Most of his parables related to stewardship and utilizing gifts for God's glory. Jesus commended a widow who generously gave out of her poverty and called to repentance those who tried to manipulate God through their love of money.

Describe an example of Jesus teaching about giftedness—time, talent, or treasure.

#### **Address Genetic Mutations of Spiritual Giftedness**

The mutation of spiritual giftedness is often expressed through greed, materialism and abuse. Spiritual gifts are perceived as self-indulgent blessings; not intended for the true purpose of building up the body of Christ. In a mutated church, their boast is in their personal gifts. When exercised within this kind of church, they're often associated with confusion and disorder. The danger is that they tend to be fixated on gifts and not the Gift-Giver. When the mutation is present, time, talents and treasures are to be consumed and spent on selfish ends in contrast to being a faithful steward. Generosity is a foreign concept for a mutated Christian. They see themselves as the owner of it all.

What does the spiritual DNA of giftedness look like in the book of Acts? Can you share an example?

#### **Learn Spiritual Giftedness from Great Awakenings**

The Second Great Awakening (1878-1843) was marked by God calling out of the called. There was a revival in the church's mission effort. The next generation of missionaries came from the harvest. The college campus was where this awakening had its beginnings; schools such as Hampden-Sydney, Yale and William Colleges. For example, Samuel Mills and his friends were students at Williams College. They prayed while seeking shelter from a storm on the side of a haystack. This is what's referred to as the "Haystack Revival" because Mills proposed a mission to India there.<sup>14</sup> By God's grace, there was an upsurge of missions giving. Most of all, this

awakening led to a great mobilization of leaders who answered God's call to missions. The resources were, and still are truly in the harvest.

What hinders this generation from experiencing an awakening that would see an upsurge of resources mobilized for a global harvest?

### **Learn Spiritual Giftedness from Entrepreneurs**

Even the business world gets it. Productivity is a watchword for business. Giftedness is directly tied to maximizing resources. Human resources, employed or volunteer, are the greatest resource of any enterprise. The work load is best shared when employees are effectively mobilized to the task at hand. In business life, time management is extremely valued and seen as critical to success. Business depends on venture capital and streams of revenue. Competencies and skills are utilized by positioning people in the organization according to their strengths. People are developed through training and ongoing education opportunities. The culture of a profitable company is not afraid to take calculated risks. Treasures are meant to be multiplied and leveraged for greater increase. Leadership and management, alike understand the importance of being a good and faithful steward of the company's resources.

What are the differences and the similarities of giftedness in the business arena and the church? What can the church learn?

### **Practice the Seven Cultural Change Factors in Your Life**

This Coming Week (Times of Refreshing)

#### **Action Items: Seven Cultural Change Factors**

- 1 Dedicate the time to God for this *Church Genome Project* season.
- 2 Pray through the ACTS Prayer Guide with at least 2 other believers
- 3 Read Acts 18 from Acts Reading Guide and trace the Spiritual Giftedness DNA Thread throughout Acts.
- 4 Listen to the sermon on Spiritual Giftedness.
- 5 Plan to attend your small group and hold each other accountable for SDNA study.
- 6 Experience the Missionary Activity on Spiritual Giftedness—Open Up Your Home, Hospitality.
- 7 Lead others by finding one person, to share what you've learned this week about Spiritual Giftedness and ask someone else in your group to share with you what they learned about Spiritual Giftedness.

## **Principle 10: Spiritual Warfare: Fight the Good Fight**

Commit to fight the good fight against the enemy by expressing the missionary DNA of spiritual warfare in your life and the life of your church.

Read Acts 19:1-41; 20:17-38

### **Becoming a Missional Change Agent for Christ**

*For Small Group Discussion and Individual Application:*

#### **Model the DNA of Jesus—Spiritual Warfare**

Jesus modeled the spiritual DNA of warfare by the way he battled the devil and his demonic forces throughout his life and ministry. The battle was real. Jesus utilized spiritual weapons and the armor of God. Whether it was at the beginning of his ministry in his wilderness temptation and at the end when the crowd called him to come down from the cross. The devil featured every tactic that was in his arsenal against Jesus. He taught his disciples to pray, “Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil” (Matthew 6:13). He gave his disciples authority over the demons reminding them to rejoice not because of this authority but the fact that their names are written in heaven (Luke 10:18-20). He encountered demonic influence and possession in people he met on a regular basis.

Describe an example of Jesus teaching about or engaging in spiritual warfare.

#### **Address Genetic Mutations of Spiritual Warfare**

The mutation of spiritual warfare is sometimes expressed by a church or an individual who ignores or denies the existence of the devil. They are never engaged in the battle for souls and holy living. They live out of touch with the reality of the warfare that is all around them. The other side is a church or an individual with an unhealthy obsession with the demonic attributing everything that happens to some sort of spiritual warfare. Both extremes exemplify the mutation, and the viewpoints lead to a tolerance for false teachers who infiltrate the flock like ravenous wolves. In a mutated church, the devil has seized footholds in the lives of many—exhibited by anger, division, confusion, and unforgiveness.

What does the spiritual DNA of warfare look like in the book of Acts? Can you share an example?

#### **Learn Spiritual Warfare from Great Awakenings**

During the First Great Awakening, John Wesley shared about his expectation of opposition and demonic attacks when doing the Lord’s work. If they were not coming his way, Wesley began to be concerned that God’s hand was being removed from his ministry. No matter what Awakening, ever leader and church that God used would testify to a high degree of spiritual warfare. Jonathan Edwards was criticized for warning people about hell and calling people to Christ. James McGready, a Kentucky revivalist, employed the strategy of “camp meetings” from which he faced opposition and misinformation campaigns about the work.<sup>15</sup> The battles were real and

required a God-given courage for all of these who dared to live on mission for Christ. The church can expect the same kind of spiritual warfare in this century and must be prepared to deal with it.

How do you supposed leaders of these great moves of God in history dealt with spiritual warfare? What does spiritual awakening cost us?

### **Learn Spiritual Warfare from Entrepreneurs**

Even the business world gets it, to a degree. There are many corporations who intentionally view themselves in a fierce battle with their competition—being in a fight to survive. They seek to create a warrior mentality among their employees and in their business culture. They charge the hill for the mission. Courageous leadership is what really separates the average leader from an exceptional leader. Think about it, military images abound in business literature, training approaches and organizational charts. For up and coming entrepreneurs, the battle is real and being successful at business is equated with being victorious.

What are the differences and the similarities of warfare in the business arena and the church? What can the church learn?

### **Practice the Seven Cultural Change Factors in Your Life**

This Coming Week (Times of Refreshing)

#### **Action Items: Seven Cultural Change Factors**

1. Dedicate the time to God for this *Church Genome Project* season.
2. Pray through the ACTS Prayer Guide with at least 2 other believers.
3. Read Acts 19-21 from Acts Reading Guide and trace the Spiritual Warfare DNA Thread throughout Acts.
4. Listen to the sermon on Spiritual Warfare.
5. Plan to attend your small group and hold each other accountable for SDNA study.
6. Experience the Missionary Activity on Spiritual Warfare—Dealing with Strongholds
7. Lead others by finding one person, to share what you've learned this week about Spiritual Warfare and ask someone else in your group to share with you what they learned about Spiritual Warfare.

## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *A Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth*, in *The Complete Works of Jonathan Edwards* ed. Sereno Dwight (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint, 1986), 294.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Ford and Samuel Crowther, *My Life and Work* (Garden City, NY: Garden City Publishing Company, 1922), 34.

<sup>3</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *The Great Awakening* ed. C.C. Geon (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959), 224.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and Its People* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1974), 50.

<sup>5</sup> Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2001), 22.

<sup>6</sup> Robert K. Greenleaf, *On Becoming a Servant Leader* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996), 7.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Tracy, *The Great Awakening: A History of the Revival of Religion in the Time of Edwards and Whitfield* (Edinburgh, UK: Banner of Truth Trust), 53.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (New York, NY: Free Press, 2001), 269.

<sup>9</sup> S.T. Kimbrough and Kenneth G.C. Newport, *The Manuscript Journal of Rev. Charles Wesley, MA vol.2* (Sherbourne, UK: Kingswood Books, 2007), 13.

<sup>10</sup> Henry T. Blackaby and Claude V. King, *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* (Nashville, TN: Lifeway Press, 1990), 6. Henry recounts God's activity in Western Canada throughout the workbook.

<sup>11</sup> Brian Tracy, *The Psychology of Selling: Increase Sales Faster and Easier Than You Ever Thought Possible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 179.

<sup>12</sup> Randall H. Balmer, *The Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 2002), 330.

<sup>13</sup> Greg Laurie and Ellen Vaughn, *The Jesus Revolution: How God Transformed an Unlikely Generation and How He Can Do It Again Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book, 2018), 13-17.

<sup>14</sup> Michael Pocock, Gailyn Van Rheen, and Douglas McConnell, *The Changing Face of World Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2005), 832.

<sup>15</sup> J.S. Grider, *Cumberland Revival* accessed December 17, 2008

<http://cumberland.org/hfcpc/churches/redrivky.htm>