
Acts 2 Journey Cohort

Retreat 4 Handout

Pastor and Vision Team Guide



Use the QR code to visit the Retreat 4 resources page.

Here, you'll find video segments of the instruction about how to launch the vision and strategy to the congregation.

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A healthy church is one that . . .

- Pursues and obeys God passionately (Worship)
- Engages and maintains loving relationships (Connect)
- Develops and mobilizes the people (Grow)
- Acts with clear direction and outward focus (Serve)
- Reproduces and multiplies His mission in other peoples and places (Go)

The Ten Questions

1. Why do we exist? (Mission)

As we have said, the mission of the Church is the common assignment—the one we share with every other congregation that proclaims Christ as Savior. The Acts 2 Church has been established with the Great Commission as its spiritual direction and the Great Commandment as its guide for love-directed behavior.

The Great Commission focuses on the **BELIEF** system which Christ taught.

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. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:19–20)

The Great Commandment focuses on the **BEHAVIOR** system which Christ modeled.

And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:37–39)

2. Where are we going? (Vision)

Vision is our congregation’s unique expression of that mission. Remember that there is a unique, Holy Spirit empowered dynamic for every local church and our first step in this Acts 2 Journey has been to prayerfully identify that direction. Our vision should proclaim the church we believe God has intended us to become.



3. How will we behave? (Values)

More than mission or vision, **CORE VALUES** tell those inside and outside the congregation what is distinctive and important. Core values represent the identity of the church and reflect how the congregation seeks to live into its preferred future.

Some of the core values we've chosen are already in place and others are aspirational—we aspire to them so we can become the church of our vision. Core values drive priorities, shape attitudes and actions, direct processes, govern relationships, and must be identified and communicated for the church to reach its full kingdom potential.

Remember that while vision can be clever and creative, values must be absolutely clear. Consider using two words (an adjective and a noun) to label your values, such as “Passionate Worship” or “Relational Evangelism” so your intent will be clearer.

Then write a sentence that explains the value itself, such as “God deserves our wholehearted worship in the words we proclaim and the way that we live.”

Finally, add a Scripture reference so our congregation can know where our values come from. So, the following demonstrates an effective way to format each of our values

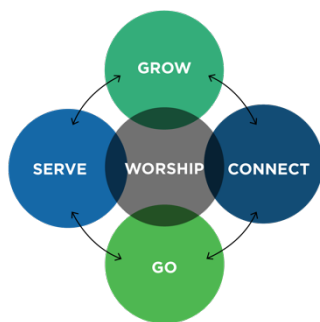
Passionate Worship

*God deserves our wholehearted worship in the words we proclaim
and the way that we live.*

John 14:15

4. How will we get there? (Strategic plan)

Once a congregation establishes its mission, vision, values, and the five functions, it is prepared to create a strategic plan. In the Acts 2 Journey, we have built our strategic plans around the five functions of the church that we find in Acts 2:42-47:



- Fellowship (Connect)
- Discipleship (Grow)
- Gift-Oriented Ministry (Serve)
- Evangelism (Go)
- Worship

So, the entire journey comes together in the strategic plan we've prayerfully designed.

Remember that strategy can never be a replacement for our pursuit of the Holy Spirit's direction. Instead, strategy should always be a result of that pursuit. We know that God has a plan for our congregation. Our hunger is for His plan, and we believe He will and has revealed it to us as we have sought His direction.

5. How will we engage new people? (Evangelism)

Fresh vision must connect with new relationships if a new lifecycle is to be launched. Every healthy church must have a plan for this key assignment and learn to be intentional in its efforts to connect with new people.

Since outward focus is the key catalyst for church health, every church must prioritize their movement outward into the community if momentum toward health is to be gained. For this reason, our first question will relate to the church's evangelism or "Go" strategy, and the remaining questions (and related functions) will follow in a more natural order.

6. How will we treat them when they arrive? (Fellowship)

Every healthy church must have a plan for connecting new people to the congregation. This assimilation plan encompasses every action we take from the moment new friends drive onto our campus through the first several weeks of their journey with us.

While there is certainly more to healthy Spirit-empowered fellowship than effectively welcoming guests into our services, effective efforts in loving and assimilating our guests will raise the level of all our fellowship efforts. Frankly, if we love new friends well, it's highly likely that our love for one another will grow as well.

7. How will we disciple them? (Discipleship)

The Great Commission defines discipleship quite clearly. Jesus said to "baptize them" and "teach them." While baptism is a single moment that demonstrates the choice for new life, teaching them all Christ has commanded requires an ongoing effort—and a plan!

So, how will we teach them what Jesus has taught us? Healthy churches have a plan for such efforts. Here we must think about a new believer's early steps, the deeper journeys of those who've known Christ for a while, the age-appropriate needs of our children and youth, and the development of personal Bible study disciplines that will help people continue their growth between Sundays.

8. How will we train them to serve? (Gift-oriented ministry)

Every individual has gifts and abilities to be used to strengthen the body of Christ. In truth, one can't really be following a Servant if he or she is not learning to serve. So, we need a plan for engaging people in serving Christ's mission.

Serving is a primary way in which we express our love for Christ. Self-sacrifice is the Bible's best definition for the love we are called to show to others. Of course, our principal focus in serving extends beyond the walls of our local church. While serving on Sundays is important and a great way to develop a servant's heart by "practicing" on those who share our faith, the real impact of our lives should be in our community—that's the mission we're made for.

9. How will we inspire them to be missional (locally and globally)?

Our Commission extends well beyond our street corner. The local church is made to impact its world, both near and far. So, what is our plan to get people involved in Christ's mission beyond our setting?

Here we find our own efforts to engage our community, our partnerships with other congregations to fulfill Christ's purposes around us, and our investment in the work of missionaries who will go where we do not.

This question also may encourage us to consider planting another congregation in our community or beyond. Remember that just as healthy disciples produce other healthy disciples, healthy churches can reproduce other healthy congregations.

10. How will we help them connect to God? (Worship)

Our final strategic question calls for a plan to help every individual connect with God. This is certainly not a last step in the sequence of our efforts. We need a plan to help people engage God regularly and directly in worship, repentance, and pursuit. Studies have demonstrated that unless people learn to engage God on their own, they will often stop growing after around five years of becoming a Christian. Simply put, *one day a week does not make a healthy spiritual life.*

Team Presentations

As you listen to the presentations of other leadership teams, make a few notes of those statements or plans that really stand out to you. Then share those insights with that team to help them know what may stand out most to their congregation at their Launch Sunday.

CHURCH 1 - _____ (church name)

I really like this part of your plan: _____

I really like this part of your plan: _____

CHURCH 2 - _____ (church name)

I really like this part of your plan: _____

I really like this part of your plan: _____

CHURCH 3 - _____ (church name)

I really like this part of your plan: _____

I really like this part of your plan: _____

CHURCH 4 - _____ (church name)

I really like this part of your plan: _____

I really like this part of your plan: _____

CHURCH 5 - _____ (church name)

I really like this part of your plan: _____

I really like this part of your plan: _____

CHURCH 6 - _____ (church name)

I really like this part of your plan: _____

I really like this part of your plan: _____

CHURCH 7 - _____ (church name)

I really like this part of your plan: _____

I really like this part of your plan: _____

CHURCH 8 - _____ (church name)

I really like this part of your plan: _____

I really like this part of your plan: _____

CHURCH 9 - _____ (church name)

I really like this part of your plan: _____

I really like this part of your plan: _____

CHURCH 10 - _____ (church name)

I really like this part of your plan: _____

I really like this part of your plan: _____

Preparing to Launch the Strategic Plan

Now that you have designed your strategic plan, it's time to prepare for launch. Effective communication is crucial and requires thorough and intentional preparation. After all, even the best plan will experience limited success if poorly communicated.

Preparing to launch the strategic plan must occur in two phases:

- Initial communication and planning steps
- Launch Sunday

Initial Communication and Planning Steps

As you prepare for launching your strategic plan, certain questions need to be answered:

1. Who needs to be added to the team as we prepare for implementation?
2. When will Launch Sunday take place?
3. What communication pieces need to be prepared? Remember the importance of a key “brochure” that provides greater detail of the strategic plan and becomes the primary handout for Launch Sunday.
4. Who needs to be brought “up-to-speed” before Launch Sunday? (*see discussion of Missional People and Ministry People below*)

The Three Audiences for Change Communication

While there are numerous ways to view the types of people in your local church, when it comes to communicating change, seeing them in one of these three groups can be most helpful.

- **Consumer** people (those who are primarily focused on their own needs)

Now, many of us may have a visceral reaction to the label “consumer.” After all, consumers are focused on what they want and they “shop around” until they find it. Consumers at church is hardly an appealing picture.

But keep in mind that all of us came to Jesus initially because of our own need. Like the crowds described in the Gospels, we came with our hurts, our brokenness, our needs for healing and hope—and we found what we longed for in Jesus and His community of worshipers. “Consumer” was even the starting point for the original twelve disciples and all who would later bear the label “apostle” and sacrifice themselves for the message they carried.

The local church at its best cares for the needs of people, both inside its walls and throughout its community. So, “consumer” is a starting point on the road to discipleship and that's the level at which many of our people currently engage our local church.

If your conversations with people are heavily focused on how they are doing or what they are gaining or how we can minister to their needs, you have likely identified them as consumer people—currently.

About two-thirds of your congregation currently engage their local church as consumers, and it's up to the remaining one-third of us to minister to their needs.

- **Ministry** people (those who help us minister to the needs of people)

Fortunately, along the way, some of our consumers have recognized the needs of others and stepped up to help us minister to those needs. These “Ministry people” serve in a variety of ways from helping in our kids’ ministries to leading a small group or caring for our facilities or helping on the worship team.

While these still have their own needs, their participation in their local church has shifted more to how they now contribute to the efforts of our church. Like that day when the disciples wondered how they could possibly feed the hungry multitude, these friends are aware of more than their own hunger and they’re ready to help us distribute whatever loaves and fish we have.

Moving consumer people to this next stage is an important part of discipleship. As we know, Christ’s kingdom calls us to the needs of others so the step into ministry service is important for every individual.

In most congregations, regardless of size, about one-third of the congregation can be identified as ministry people.

One important note: The ratio of consumer people to ministry people (2:1) isn’t likely to change very much, regardless of the effectiveness of our discipleship efforts. While we certainly want to guide every consumer into ministry involvement, the truth is that the more ministry people we have, the more consumer people we can minister to. So, as this second group grows, the first group grows too. Simply put, the more ministry people we have, the more consumer people we will draw into our worshiping community.

- **Missional** people (those who find their purpose in Christ’s kingdom)

Of course, the math itself raises questions about a third group of people. If two-thirds of our congregation are consumer people and one-third are ministry people, everyone would be included in these two groups. But among our Ministry people, there’s another group that have taken an even deeper step and become truly missional in their efforts for Christ.

These are the people who have found their own sense of purpose and commitment in their ministry efforts. They use their abilities and God-given gifts to lead others and they model the heart of Christ alongside their pastor. As one pastor described them, these people “get it.” Pastor can share his deepest heart with these friends. They are committed to Christ’s mission and to the ongoing effectiveness of their local congregation.

Somewhere in their journey of following Jesus, the Twelve became missional. They moved beyond lining up those who needed Jesus to heal them and began to see their assignment as a part of His. Identifying exactly when that happened may not be possible, but it’s clear that such a shift did occur for each them. In the same way, as we engage consumer people and guide them to ministry efforts, their faithfulness and commitment will one day bring a similar shift as they, too, begin to “own the mission” of Christ.

In truth, becoming missional is something that occurs as the Holy Spirit works in the life of an individual believer. As leaders, we cannot make that happen. We can simply provide ministry opportunities where people can serve Christ's mission and trust the Holy Spirit to lead these servants in His timing and manner. We can, however, note one or more of the following indicators of a missional disciple:

- Missional people are motivated by **LOVE** for Christ and for those He has called them to serve.
- Missional people have found a sense of **PURPOSE**, even calling, in their ministry efforts.
- Missional people are more than ministry helpers. They **LEAD OTHERS** to give their best in serving Christ.
- Missional people see needs and look to **THEIR OWN** resources before placing expectations on others.
- Missional people reflect the **HEART** of Christ and act in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Missional people pursue Christ in their daily lives at their own **INITIATIVE**.
- Missional people seek **UNITY** and **HUMILITY** rather than preference and control.
- Missional people will stand for Christ even when **ALONE**.

So, now that we understand these three groups, let's consider how we use this information on communicating change.

Group	Percentage of Congregation	Order of communication	Setting
Consumer	Two-thirds	Last	On Launch Sunday
Ministry	One-third	Second	In a team meeting
Missional	A segment within the Ministry group	First, well before launching new initiatives	Individually over a cup of coffee

When communicating any significant change in our church's ministry efforts, such as our new vision, values, and strategic plan, these three groups present three distinct steps in that communication. In truth, any major change will benefit from this approach to communication.

First, we must communicate the new direction to our Missional people. These friends carry the heart of Christ with us within our local church. Likely some of them have been a part of our praying and planning for this new direction, but any who have not participated need to be brought into the new direction we are taking. Usually, these conversations should be personal and individual—a cup of coffee over which we describe how God is directing us. We want and need to input these Missional people can provide and we absolutely need their support as we move forward.

Second, we communicate the new direction to our Ministry people. This can be done in larger groups where they are gathered with others who also assist our ministry efforts. These friends will play important parts in helping us implement our new plans so we want to help them understand our new direction well ahead of our effort to implement our plans. So, this might occur in team meetings or a larger gathering of our entire ministry team.

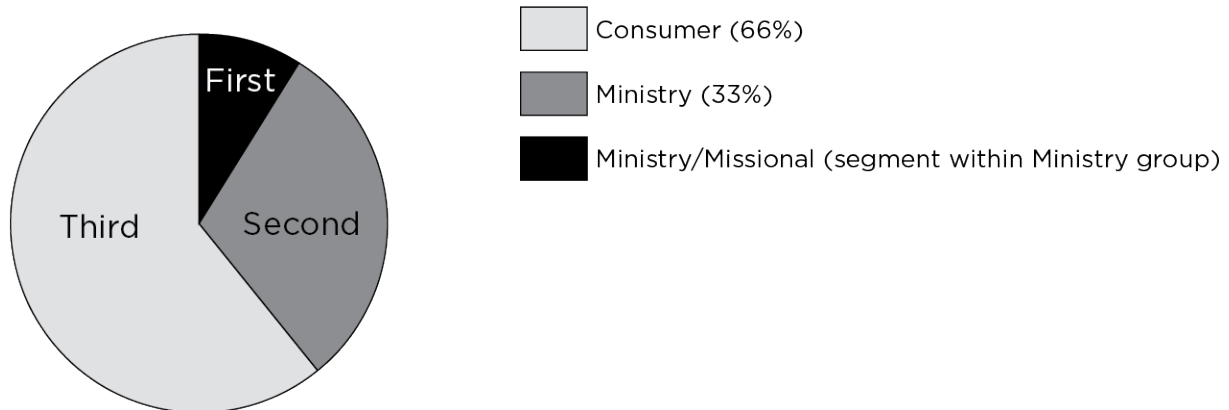
Finally, we communicate the new direction to our Consumer people, usually in the form of a Vision Sunday or some type of special announcement setting.

When you take this approach, you will have already unveiled the new direction to one-third of your congregation before the “big announcement” to the entire congregation. This is very important to clear communication. Remember that your consumer people will hear this new information through a “how will this affect me” filter. Because you have already equipped your Missional and Ministry people with clear information, these friends can assist you in addressing questions or even concerns expressed by the larger group.

If you wait and announce big changes to everyone at once, you will stand alone in addressing all uncertainties and your chances of success will diminish. Significant change should be an “us” decision whenever possible.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Never treat your Missional people or Ministry people like consumers. They are your partners in ministry effort and need to be treated as such. If you treat these committed friends like consumers, over time some of them will likely return to that status.

Communication order



- How will the preaching schedule prepare for Launch Sunday? For example, a sermon series that highlights the mission of Christ, the needs of our community, and perhaps even describes the history of our local congregation to this point may help prepare the congregation to hear the plan that will be unveiled on Launch Sunday.

Launch Sunday

For several months, perhaps even a year, you and your team have been preparing for your church's future. You have sought God's direction concerning vision, needed values, and specific strategic steps toward becoming a true Acts 2 church. The magnitude of this moment in your local congregation's history is potentially enormous!

Now it's time to bring the full congregation into this journey. Remember, they haven't walked these steps with you so Launch Sunday plays a major role in engaging them and inviting them to walk the road mapped out before us.

Launch Sunday should be a much-anticipated and exciting day and your team should take every available step to make it exactly that. Here's some planning advice for Launch Sunday and a few of the best practices taken from the efforts of those who have already celebrated Launch Sunday with their congregations.

Prior to launching the vision:

- Promote the date for launch Sunday to create anticipation, excitement, and energy.
- Order banners, handouts, matching shirts, wristbands, etc. to help in creating buzz. Make the launch Sunday a big deal. Let people know that Launch (or Vision) Sunday will determine the future of our church.
- Research some of the statistics on your surrounding community as you prepare the launch Sunday presentation. Where possible, use data to present a clear picture of

the community's demographic makeup and needs (web resources like city-data.com can be helpful).

- Have each team member tour the church's facilities as if they were guests. Make notes about observations, including issues that require immediate attention and ideas for improving the guest experience—restrooms, cleanliness of décor and furniture, ease of access, etc.
- Consider how you want the congregation to respond, and create a commitment card (see below for ideas on what the commitment card might include)

During the presentation of the Vision:

- Create PowerPoint® presentations or videos to help people capture the vision.
- If possible, create a booklet similar to the samples provided during the sessions. "Write the vision and make it plain" (Habakkuk 2:2, NKJV). Because it can be difficult to capture all the detail provided in an electronic presentation or a video, printed pieces are important.
- Remember that this Acts 2 Journey has been a team effort. It's VERY IMPORTANT that the team be visible and fully participating in the Launch Sunday communication! While every team member may not have a speaking role in the presentation, find meaningful ways to demonstrate that this journey has been an "US" event from the outset. When the team is visible, the congregation will see clearly that this strategic plan is what we are doing, not just what pastor or a few leaders want us to do.

During the sermon/presentation:

- Give some facts about the needs of the community and take a few moments to reflect on your church's historical effort to minister to the community.
- Then, reveal the vision statement and your passion for its intent, knowing this is your new destination for the future.
- Share the values that the team has identified.
- Provide an overview of the strategic plan, but keep in mind that the primary goal is to unveil the new vision and challenge everyone to get involved.
- Close with a reminder of the need, perhaps using the number of people who are unchurched in the community, county, etc.

IMPORTANT: Don't overwhelm the congregation with too many strategy steps in your presentation. Keep the focus on vision and values and share enough strategy to demonstrate that you have a plan. More strategy pieces can be included in the printed booklet.

Response Time

- Distribute a commitment card to use for response. Remember that the goal is for the congregation to express their desire to be a part of the journey ahead. Some groups have found it beneficial to identify certain expressions of commitment to help people get engaged. Here's a few examples of such expressions of commitment:
 - Attend a worship service each week
 - Grow in a small group or Sunday School class
 - Serve in some ministry area or join a ministry team
 - Identify three friends who need Jesus and begin praying for the opportunities to influence them or even invite them to a church service.
- Make available a list of ministry teams, groups, and classes.

Managing Change Communication

As your change communication unfolds, you may find moments where certain aspects of your plan need to be emphasized. Because significant change encompasses so many different communication parts, at times your team or those you lead may demonstrate uncertainty or confusion with certain parts.

The chart below can serve as a guide for identifying the area(s) of emphasis needed, depending on where the uncertainty or confusion seems to be expressed.

Using the chart below, we can see that if all elements are being communicated effectively (Row 1), the result will most likely be “Successful Change.” However, if we are currently experiencing a different result (Column 7), we can use this chart to determine which area(s) need greater emphasis.

For example, if we are experiencing “Confusion” or even “Chaos,” this would indicate a need to emphasize “Vision” as this is the piece most lacking. If, instead, we are currently encountering “Conflict” or “Apathy” among our team or congregation, likely our “Values” need to be emphasized more fully.

Each row of the chart below indicates which item should be emphasized, depending on the result we are currently experiencing (Column 7). You will likely find this chart to be useful throughout your entire journey of implementing significant change.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Vision	Values	Communi- cation	Skills	Resources	Action Plans	Successful Change
	Values	Communi- cation	Skills	Resources	Action Plans	Confusion Chaos
Vision		Communi- cation	Skills	Resources	Action Plans	Conflict Apathy
Vision	Values		Skills	Resources	Action Plans	Misunder- standing
Vision	Values	Communi- cation		Resources	Action Plans	Anxiety Insecurity
Vision	Values	Communi- cation	Skills		Action Plans	Frustration
Vision	Values	Communi- cation	Skills	Resources		False Starts

The above chart appears in “Leading in Times of Change,” Leadership Development Resources, LLC, 2002.

Team Members' New Roles

As a member of the Acts 2 Team in your local church, your leadership influence may be growing. You may have been a part of your church's leadership team in the past or this may have been a first such experience in your own life journey.

Either way, you're now a leader—whether you feel like one or not!

While you have been a part of this important journey with other leaders around your table, the need for your voice and influence continues to matter greatly. Yes, you have been “on the inside” of this strategic planning process, and for that reason alone, people in your congregation will now see you as one of the leaders in your local church. Don't resist that or be fearful. You have much to offer to the journey ahead, so trust God to continue to guide you as He has throughout this journey.

What can you do? First, be faithful in prayer and in support for your pastor and every member of the leadership team. Unity has never mattered more than it does now as we begin a journey to the future together.

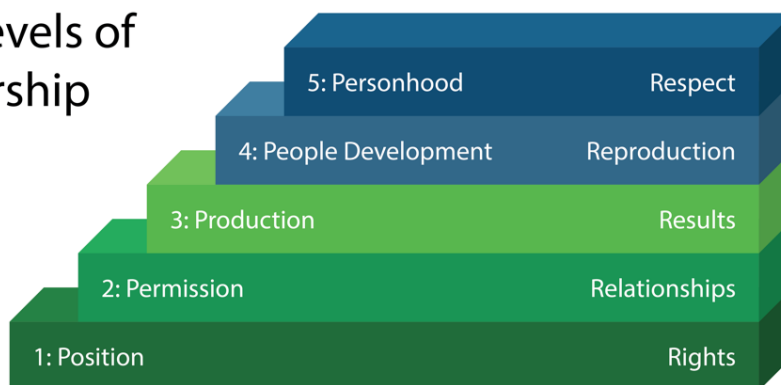
Second, bring the scope of your influence to the effort. Regardless of the role(s) you may have filled previously, you have a level of influence with various members of the congregation and that is likely to grow even more now. Back in Retreat 2, we discussed leadership influence and we were mostly talking about your pastor's influence at that point.

Now let's talk about yours...

Leadership as Influence: Five Levels of Leadershipⁱ

In *Developing the Leader Within You*, John Maxwell defines leadership as influence and outlines five levels of leadership that must be mastered to achieve the highest level of influence.

Five Levels of Leadership



Level 1: Position (Rights)

- People follow the leader because they have to.
- Influence is based on the authority of the leader's position or title.
- People will do no more than is required.
- Activity at this level can be self-centered.
- You can't lead change at this level.

Level 2: Permission (Relationships)

- People follow the leader because they want to.
- The leader's influence grows as trust and respect deepen.
- People believe the leader is competent and believe the leader cares.
- Activity at this level can be fellowship centered.
- You will struggle to lead change at this level.

Level 3: Production (Results)

- People follow the leader because of what is being done for the church.
- The leader's influence expands as the leader accomplishes church goals.
- The leader communicates vision, and the congregation sees fruit.
- Activity at this level can be task centered.
- You can successfully initiate and lead change at this level.

Level 4: People Development (Reproduction)

- People follow the leader because of what is being sown into individuals.
- The leader's influence soars as people are empowered.
- The leader intentionally invests in developing and mentoring leaders.
- Activity at this level can be program or meeting centered.

Level 5: Personhood (Respect)

- People follow the leader because of who the leader is and what the leader stands for.
- The leader's influence extends beyond the pastor's lifetime.
- The leader is honored and respected because of his or her commitment and consistency over many years.
- Activity at this level can be succession centered.

In every relationship you have in your local church, you have some level of influence. And, that influence is likely to grow, perhaps even reaching higher levels in the days ahead.

So, how can you use your influence to help your team communicate effectively and encourage the congregation toward this new future? Your conversations matter! Your voice needs to be heard among your friends! Step into this moment with an open and humble heart and God may use you to impact some who are hesitant to respond to other members of your team. Your influence will make a difference!

LEADING TRANSFORMATION

To move from LEVEL 1 to LEVEL 2:

- ◆ Demonstrate competence.
- ◆ Grow spiritually, physically, and relationally.
- ◆ Do not use force to control.

To move from LEVEL 2 to LEVEL 3:

- ◆ Build a solid leadership team.
- ◆ Create a shared vision and a plan of action.
- ◆ Acquire and allocate resources.

To move from LEVEL 3 to LEVEL 4:

- ◆ Put people over programs.
- ◆ Intentionally invest in developing others.
- ◆ Be willing to make tough calls.

To move from LEVEL 4 to LEVEL 5:

- ◆ Be consistent.
- ◆ Share knowledge and wisdom.
- ◆ Create a succession plan.

Finally, we need every team member to demonstrate passion for the vision and model the values we're pursuing. Model serving by finding the place where your gifts and abilities can be used to impact the lives of others. As each of us do our part, others will join us, bringing their unique gifts and abilities to the journey. When that begins to happen, we establish a new momentum toward the future we believe God has for our church.

Then, we will really be on an Acts 2 Journey!

Our Prayer for You

"Go, make disciples" are three powerful words that gives us a clear-cut directive for the people who come in our lives, our churches, and our future.

Our prayer is that of Hebrews 13:20–21 (ESV):

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Our team is always available to you in the future.

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ⁱ John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000).