

Church Genome Project

Five Spiritual DNA Couplets: Revitalization

Spiritual DNA Individual/Small Group Discussion Guides

(Five Week Missional Revival Season)

Week One

Spiritual DNA and Missional Revival DNA Couplet-Preparation and Giftedness

For Small Group Discussion

DNA Couplet #1

Spiritual Preparation—commit to the Father’s work of spiritual preparation in your life and the life of your church.

Spiritual Giftedness—commit to sharing the resources God has given you in your life and the life of your church.

Peter and John were on trial before the Sanhedrin. Their level of preparation was revealed in the face of opposition and the subsequent expression of the church’s giftedness. These interrelated responses were seen in a prayer meeting and an outpouring of generosity through this new church.

Preparation and Giftedness Go Together

The church understood the importance of praying and waiting with an expectation for God to work. Spiritual preparation moved beyond the initial Upper Room experience. Peter and John were beaten and then warned not to preach the gospel anymore. Then, once again, the church turned to God in dependent prayer. Amazingly, it was a prayer for boldness.

Read Acts 4:23-31

Discussion Questions:

When dealing with opposition, discuss how being spiritually prepared effects your level missional engagement?

Acts 4:13 reads, “*When they observed the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed and recognized that they had been with Jesus.*”

What does that statement suggest about the level of spiritual preparation in Peter and John’s life? Discuss what it really means to be with Jesus.

Pause and pray, asking the Father to give you special times with Jesus in spiritual preparation.

Read Acts 4:32-37

Discussion Questions:

Based on this preceding passage, why do you suppose Luke reported about the unity and generous spirit in the Jerusalem church?

Acts 4:33 reads, “And the apostles were giving testimony with great power to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was on all of them.”

What is the missional connection between great power and great grace? Do you observe any spiritual gifts in the life of Barnabas? Share these with your group.

Pause and pray, asking the Father to give you the heart to express spiritual giftedness in tangible acts of mercy to those in need.

Missional Action

This week determine to be a prepared witness with great power and a generous member of the church exhibiting great grace. Seize the opportunities to express this couplet of spiritual DNA.

Week Two

Spiritual DNA and Missional Revival DNA Couplet-Authority and Warfare

For Small Group Discussion

DNA Couplet #2

Spiritual Authority—continuously receive and rely on the Holy Spirit, the Father’s promise of spiritual authority in your life and the life of your church.

Spiritual Warfare—commit to fight the good fight of faith in your life and the life of your church.

Peter and John were sent to Samaria by the Jerusalem church to see what God was doing among the Samaritans. Philip was sharing the gospel and baptizing those who had believed. There was great joy in that city.

Authority and Warfare Go Together

The Jerusalem church had received the promise of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. But now, these Samaritans were soon going to receive the Holy Spirit through Peter and John laying hands upon them. The question is not how this impartation happened. However, the truth at hand is concerning the essential need for Holy Spirit reliance in a believer’s life. This is the DNA of spiritual authority. And just like clockwork, the devil reared his ugly head through Simon the sorcerer who wanted to purchase the gift of the Holy Spirit. He was looking for a formula. This lust for power was soon to set the stage for an encounter and another Book of Acts expression of the DNA of spiritual warfare.

Read Acts 8:14-17

Discussion Questions:

What obstacles do you think Peter and John might have had to overcome to help these Samaritans receive the Holy Spirit?

Acts 8:15 reads, “*After they went down there, they prayed for them so the Samaritans might receive the Holy Spirit because he had not yet come down on any of them.*”

What does the fact that “they prayed for them” tell you about Peter and John’s hearts? Discuss about how the Holy Spirit can remove your prejudices.

Pause and pray, asking the Father to fill you afresh with his Holy Spirit and use you on mission with him to reach all peoples with the gospel.

Read Acts 8:18-25

Discussion Questions:

Consider Simon's actions, discuss where you observe evil and demonic influences in his life? What does the passage tell us about Simon's heart condition?

Acts 8:24 reads, *"Pray to the Lord for me," Simon replied, "so that nothing you have said may happen to me."*

There is no doubt that Peter confronted the sin, bitterness and wickedness in Simon the sorcerer's heart. What do believe might have been the rest of the story? Why was there no response recorded? Share with your group any insights.

Pause and pray, asking the Father to teach you how to operate in the authority of the Holy Spirit when confronting evil.

Missional Action

This week surrender to the Holy Spirit's work in your life and fight the good fight when dealing with spiritual warfare. This couplet of DNA is expressed by relying on the Holy Spirit and overcoming in spiritual battles.

Week Three

Spiritual DNA and Missional Revival DNA Couplet-Leadership and Synergy

For Small Group Discussion

DNA Couplet #3

Spiritual Leadership—invest in identifying and nurturing missional leadership.

Spiritual Synergy—choose to work together as a synergistic team in your life and the life of your church.

The church at Antioch was a healthy church of missional leaders. Spiritual leadership and spiritual synergy are complimentary DNA threads. The selection and the commissioning of the new leaders at Antioch demonstrate the importance of creating a sending church culture.

Leadership and Synergy Go Together

The church at Antioch was blessed with a cast of leaders some known and others unknown. Spiritual leadership is expressed in obedience to God. It was out of their first decision to worship, pray and fast that God revealed who was to be sent and the makeup of the missional teams. Leadership is both shared and synergistic in the Book of Acts. The Great Commission requires this of us.

Read Acts 13:1

Discussion Questions:

Have you ever thought about the diversity of the leadership and teams within the church at Antioch? In verse 1, discuss what evidences of diversity you observe from this list.

Ephesians 4:11-13 reads, “*And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, equipping the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God’s Son, growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ’s fullness.*”

In Ephesians, where do you see the unity and diversity in the leadership? Where do you see teamwork? Review the entire chapter and then discuss what you believe to be God’s vision for you as a leader and a team member in your church.

Pause and pray, asking the Father to shape you into a godly leader and team member who works to foster unity and diversity in the Body of Christ.

Read Acts 13:2-4

Discussion Questions:

The church at Antioch sought God's will in sending out a missionary team. How did they determine what the Spirit was saying? Describe the importance of worship, praying and fasting when facing leadership decisions.

Acts 13:2 reads, *"As they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'"*

What is the significance of God calling Barnabas and Saul together? When you are doing God's work and answering his call, the Lord has a way of applying his synergistic power to the equation. Share one of your personal experiences with God's synergy.

Pause and pray, asking the Father to give you wisdom in leadership decisions and team formation.

Missional Action

This week seek God's wisdom through worship, prayer and fasting. Take steps to learn how to be the best possible leader and team member in your spheres of influence. Commit to expressing the spiritual DNA couplet of leadership and synergy in your life and ministry.

Week Four

Spiritual DNA and Missional Revival DNA Couplet-Receptivity and Sowing

For Small Group Discussion

DNA Couplet #4

Spiritual Receptivity—commit to seek and engage persons of peace as you express the DNA of spiritual receptivity in your life and the life of your church.

Spiritual Sowing—commit to intentionally evangelize by sharing the gospel and making disciples in your life and the life of your church.

The start of the church in Thessalonica and Berea are great examples of receptivity and sowing. Paul and Silas entered the synagogue at his customary starting point to sow the gospel. There were some who believed like Jason (a person of peace), Greeks and some leading women of the city. Many were hostile and rejected the message—running them out of town. In contrast, Berea was super receptive and eager to receive the gospel message. They examined the Scriptures daily to confirm the truth of what was being taught.

Receptivity and Sowing Go Together

The spiritual DNA principles of receptivity and sowing clearly are interrelated. You really can't have any fruit without receptivity. God provides receptive places and persons of peace who need to hear the gospel. The missionaries of Acts consistently found receptive places/peoples and sowed the gospel with various approaches.

Read Acts 17:1-2

Discussion Questions:

Why do you think Paul made it his pattern to engage the people of the local synagogue first? Discuss receptive places in your rhythms of life and how you might find a way to share the gospel there.

Luke 10:5-6 reads, “*Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this household.’ If a person of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you.*”

In the verses from Luke, Jesus instructed his disciples to look for receptive people in a community for the sake of the gospel. How would you determine if someone is a person of peace or if they are receptive? What receptive actions do we observe in those verses?

Pause and pray, asking the Father to lead you to strategic persons of peace in your life and that he would give you the boldness to share the gospel with them.

Read Acts 17:2-4

Discussion Questions:

There are five ways that Paul practiced spiritual sowing-evangelizing and making disciples in Thessalonica? Can you point all of them out? Describe one sowing approach that best resonates with you and why it does.

Acts 17:11 reads, *“The people here were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, since they received the word with eagerness and examined the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.”*

If there is much sowing, then they’ll be much reaping. In the preceding verse, what do you believe is meant by noble character? Are there people you ought to be sowing the word into their lives? Discuss what changes you need to make to increase your sowing capacity.

Pause and pray, asking the Father to give you a desire to sow the gospel regardless of the response.

Missional Action

This week determine to visit at least one place and assess the receptivity level to the gospel by endeavoring to have a gospel conversation. Also, find at least one person to share the gospel with or to invite them into a discipleship relationship. This will take courage and sacrifice on your part but, the effort will be worth it.

Week Five

Spiritual DNA and Missional Revival DNA Couplet-Understanding and Bridges

For Small Group Discussion

DNA Couplet #5

Spiritual Understanding—follow God’s lead to the people and places he wants you and your church to engage.

Spiritual Bridges—look to points of connection in your culture individually and within your church.

Throughout Acts, the church is ever moving to new peoples and places with the gospel. The application of the spiritual DNA threads of understanding and bridges makes this possible. For example, these missionaries had to cross major barriers to get the gospel to Samaritans and then onward to the Gentiles. God spoke to Peter on a rooftop through a vision and helped him understand the gospel is for all peoples. Paul spoke to Athenians on Mars Hill finding bridges in the culture.

Understanding and Bridges Go Together

These spiritual DNA principles interface with one another in a powerful way. An understanding of the culture of a community or people group is crucial in the discovery of bridges for the gospel. God used Paul in Athens by giving him the insights to the intellectual and religious culture. These insights were combined with a keen eye for spotting spiritual bridges.

Read Acts 17:16-21

Discussion Questions:

From the passage, what were the various people groups Paul was missionally engaged with in Athens? Discuss the list and compare those to people in your own mission field. How well do you know and understand their worldview and beliefs?

Acts 17:18 reads, “*Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also debated him. Some said, “What is this ignorant show-off trying to say.” Others replied, “He seems to be a preacher of foreign deities”—because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection”*

In verse 18, we are introduced to philosophers with specific worldviews. Why is it important to know the mindset and filters of those with whom you are sharing the gospel? Describe a time that you witnessed to an intellectual person who was not open and even hostile to the gospel.

Pause and pray, asking the Father to help you understand the people God is calling you to engage with the gospel, even if they may seem hard to reach.

Read Acts 17:22-29

Discussion Questions:

In the preceding passage, there are many spiritual bridges Paul crossed in order to get to the gospel (an idol, God's nature, creation and arts). Choose one these bridges and describe how you might utilize it with someone in a witnessing situation.

Acts 17:23 reads, *"For as I was passing through and observing the objects of your worship, I even found an altar on which was inscribed: 'To an Unknown God.' Therefore, what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you."*

In verse 23, what two actions did Paul do to better understand and relate to the people of Athens? Describe some possible bridges in the places you have discovered when engaging people for Christ.

Pause and pray, asking the Father to help you discover spiritual bridges to the gospel.

Missional Action

This week select a particular people group or a place and begin to prayerfully study them through observation and research. Seek to identify a bridge in that culture, then decide to prayerfully engage at least one person from that people group or place using the bridge you discovered.