

Guide Overview

This Guide is presented in two parts. Part One covers the biblical vision. Part Two covers implementation.

Part One—Vision

Biblical discipleship occurs in the ordinary, to the ordinary, and through the ordinary.

This Guide seeks to communicate—and help churches implement—the vision of seeing with renewed biblical clarity the Great Commission: Evangelism and Discipleship over generations through gospel-integrated, heart-level, household relationships.

What is a GPS?

To better understand the vision and how to implement it, we'll use the acronym and metaphor of a GPS, or Global Positioning System. Before explaining how we use GPS to communicate the biblical vision, I will first say a little about what a GPS is and how it works.

A GPS is a navigational system involving satellites, computers, and receivers that guides a vehicle to a pre-selected destination. Though initially designed for use in military aircraft and sailing vessels, increasingly, civilians are using this navigational system in their cars. Its a matter of simply placing the receiver (about the size of a very small book) on the dashboard, typing in the address of the destination and then the satellites and computers automatically plan the best route, using waypoints, to get there. All that the driver has to do is follow the directions it provides, greatly simplifying an otherwise complicated and potentially trying process!

The Vision as Told Using GPS

Just as the GPS guides a car TO its destination, so this simple vision guides church leaders and households in building ministry in the local church BY keeping the focus on basic biblical principles. For the purposes of the vision, GPS stands for:

Goal—Accomplishing the Great Commission: Evangelism and Discipleship Over Generations

Process—Gospel-Integrated, Heart-Level Relationships

Structure—Household Relationships in the Church and the Home

Goal, Process, and Structure are covered in Part One.

Immediately after each piece of the vision is presented, sets of questions follow for study and discussion, which can be used to aid in evaluating how the vision is currently being applied in ministry in the church and in the home.

To close Part One, an analysis of this vision’s ministry design is compared with both the traditional and the over-corrective ministry designs.

Part Two—Implementation

Implementation Approaches

Part Two opens with four approaches to implementing the vision. Any church seeking to implement this vision generally will find one of these approaches most helpful in providing an understanding of the nuances—advantages *and* challenges—of implementation in their unique situation. In each of the four approaches, examples are included of how the approach was implemented well and how it was done poorly.

These four implementation approaches are:

- The Incremental Approach
- The Systematic Approach
- The Fresh Start Approach
- The Church Planting Approach

Waypoints

In Part One, we use the acronym GPS to provide a helpful tool for expressing the biblical vision. In Part Two, we discuss how to implement the vision by continuing with the metaphor of how a GPS works.

God’s Word says that these and many more *household* relationships, lived out in the church and in the home, are vital to effective accomplishment of the Great Commission. Yet, when it comes to how we design equipping ministries, how much focus do we place on relationships?

We must begin to believe that ministry is not simply about bringing people into the Christian Faith, but it is about their transformation in the image of Jesus Christ, presenting them complete in Christ, which is a matter of God’s Holy Spirit working sovereignly in the life of the individual through those with whom they are in relationship—beginning with their own household, and then members of God’s household, the church.

For example, a GPS uses waypoints to plot a sequential path that ultimately leads to the destination. Waypoints also provide a way for the system to measure progress in the journey.

The steps to implementing the vision can also be thought of as “waypoints.” Accomplishing each waypoint will be foundational to the success of the next waypoint in the sequence. There are no shortcuts!

At the end of each waypoint chapter, there is an overview of what you are seeking to accomplish at that waypoint as well as discussion of “signs of success” and “signs of trouble” tailored to the implementation approaches.

- Waypoint 1 Church Leadership: Study, Discussion, and Agreement
- Waypoint 2 Communicating the Vision to the Congregation
- Waypoint 3 Building Relationships in the Home
- Waypoint 4 Building Relationships in the Church Through Hospitality and Church-wide Programs

Resource DVDs and CD

Included with this Guide are two DVDs, one CD, and resource materials in the Appendix. As you go through the Guide, you will be prompted when one of the topics is supplemented by features contained in one of these resources.

The two DVDs contain interviews with five church leaders who are implementing the vision in each of the four implementation approaches presented at the beginning of Part Two. These interviews will encourage church leaders who are wondering, “Can this be done?”; “Am I alone?”; “Does this really work?”; and a host of other related questions. Plan to view these testimonials—in their entirety—as part of your leadership’s study of the vision.

The CD contains several helpful resources including eight sermons (preached by one of the pastors interviewed on the DVDs) to present the vision to his congregation. Also contained are documents which provide examples of how churches following this vision are expressing it in various printed communications such as brochures and church covenants.