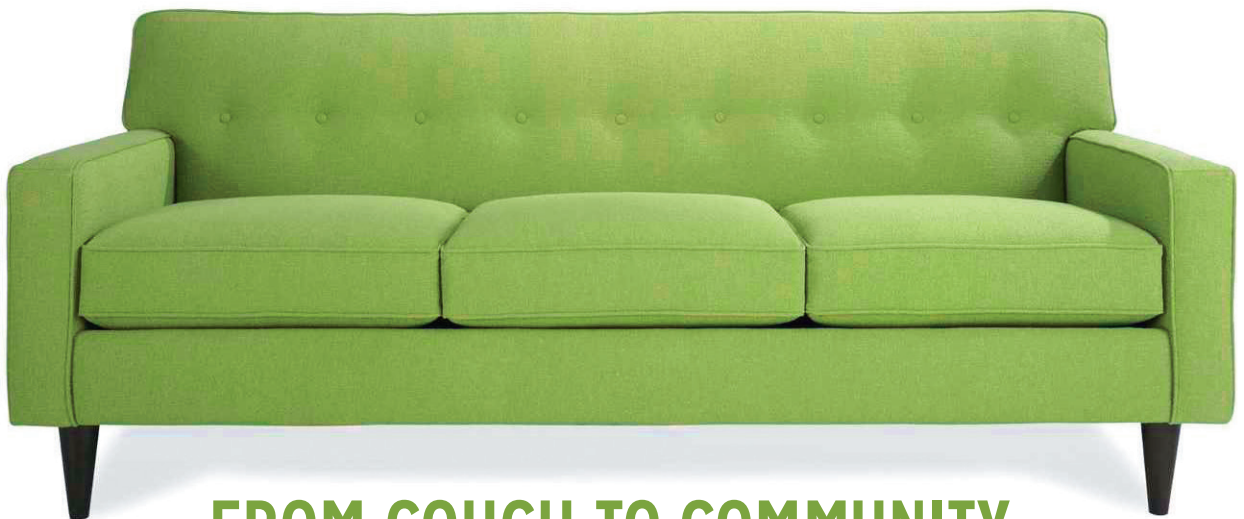


the  
**SHIFT**  
**EXERCISE**



**FROM COUCH TO COMMUNITY**

# the SHIFT EXERCISE

## INTRO:

Mission Impossible was originally a TV series, and it wasn't so much about one guy as it was a team, the "Impossible Mission Force." The IMF agents were part-time operatives that held regular jobs in the real world of civilian activity. They were all ridiculously successful and rich, so not "real" in the terms of everyday life, but hey, it's TV. I'm surprised they had real jobs at all.

At the beginning of each show, the Impossible Mission Force team leader would get a message from the "Secretary" that would outline the mission. Prefacing every message was the famous line, "Your mission, should you choose to accept it..." The reason was made clear by the scope of the missions: they had been deemed impossible. They were outlandish – full of risk, with such high stakes you would have to be crazy to even entertain the possibility of accepting them.

Enter the Impossible Mission Force.

This team of part-time espionage specialists, against all odds and in the face of sensible practicality and reason, never once declined a mission. Through two separate TV series, hundreds of episodes, and four movies, the IMF always accepted. Why? Because if they didn't, no one would. They were, after all, "impossible" missions. However, there was another reason just as important. The characters were made for it. They enjoyed it. It was their calling. It fulfilled their lives. When they were on a mission, and accomplishing it, they were doing what they were put on the earth to do.

- Do we understand the impossible mission before us?
- Do we know how outlandish, risky, and high staked the mission is?
- Do we see that if we don't answer the call, no one will?
- Do we truly understand that when we become justified through faith in Jesus Christ, we become God's Impossible Mission Force?
- Do we really believe that we now find our joy, calling, and fulfillment in life through participating in the mission of God?
- Do we realize that we have already chosen to accept the mission?

## DAILY READING PLAN:

M	T	W	Th	F	Sa	Su
Genesis 1:1-4	Deuteronomy 4:32-39	Isaiah 49:8-13	John 1:14-18	Romans 8:31-35	Hebrews 10:11-18	Revelation 5:11-14
Genesis 12:1-4	Exodus 24:7-8	Jeremiah 31:31-34	Matthew 28:18-20	John 17:20-26	Ephesians 2:11-22	1 Timothy 4:1-5
Acts 8:1-8	John 4:39-42	1 John 4:7-14	James 2:14-20	Hebrews 10:19-25	Philippians 2:3:11	Romans 6:4-11
Genesis 1:26-31	Jeremiah 29:4-14	Ezekiel 34:25-31	Zechariah 8:4-5	Luke 19:41-44	John 15:12-17	Revelation 21:1-8

### Personal Reflection Questions:

**WEEK 1** - God of Mission: How does God act in this passage? Which characteristics of His are on display? What does it reveal about God's heart for His people?

**WEEK 2** - People of Mission: How are God's people to act in this passage? Toward God? Toward others? What does it call or motivate you to do?

**WEEK 3** - Gospel Movement: What is the Good News of this passage? Restate it out loud as a prayer to God, thanking Him for Jesus. How and in what ways should the Gospel necessarily move you to action?

**WEEK 4** - Build a Great City: What is God's preferred state of being for gathered people (or city) in this passage? How does peace build a great city? How can you contribute to it?

### Supplies Needed For The Whole Series:

Post it notes, 2-3 posterboards or a big white erase board, markers, a notebook or device for tracking notes, sticky dots

## WEEK #1: HOW CAN YOU LIVE YOUR MISSION?

### Understanding Missional Thinking

**Think/Discuss:** If Jesus appeared in your bedroom and said to you, "A year from today I am sending you to \_\_\_\_\_ to fulfill my Great Commission there, get ready."

**What would you do to get ready? (Group Discussion - 10 mins)**

**What would you do to complete the task once you arrived there?  
(Group Discussion - 10 mins)**

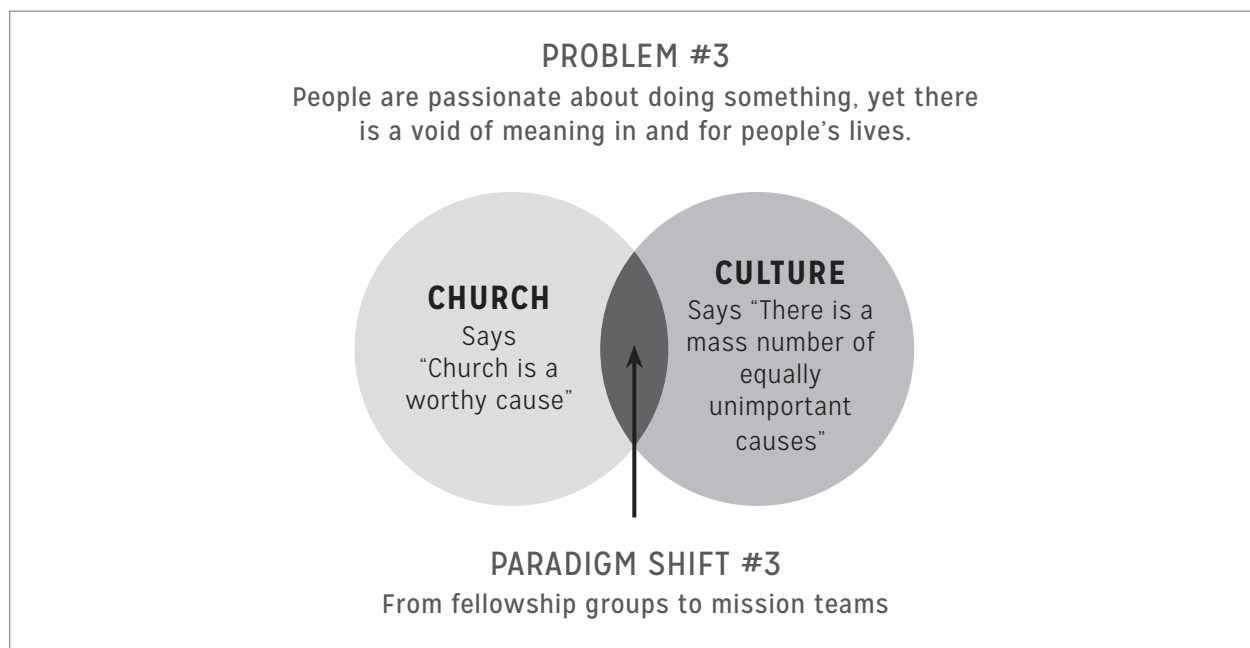
### Questions:

If God is not sending you to \_\_\_\_\_ to fulfill the Great Commission, then He has sent you here, to your city, to your neighborhood.

What are you doing to get ready?

What are you doing now that you have arrived?

## WEEK #2: WHY SHIFT – WHERE ARE WE GOING?



### Opening Discussion: (5 Min)

1. If you did not go to Church – if you were an unchurched secular minded person – what message would you be receiving about what is most important in life? What is Oprah telling you to do? Dr. Oz? The Kardashians?
2. Have you ever really thought about what we are asking people to “do” as a Church? As a Small Group? What are we asking them to do? Why?

### Exercise: (30 min)

Breakout your group into smaller groups of 3-4. Ask each other the 6 Made For This questions and write down each answer on one Post It note. Come back together as a group and put all the Post Its on the wall or on a poster board and group them into similar themes/answers.

## WEEK #2: (continued)

### Made for This Questions:

1. The Leadership Question: Who is calling the shots in your life?
2. The Fruit Question: Where do you encourage, comfort and strengthen other believers?
3. The Passion Question: What energizes you?
4. The Justice Question: What wrecks you?
5. The Priority Question: If money and time were no object, what would you do?
6. The Urgency Question: If Jesus said, “you have exactly 5 years to live,” what would you make sure you did?

**Record the answers in your notebook. We will refer back to those later in the series.**

### Closing Discussion Questions:

1. What are emerging themes? Which ones can we lump together?
2. What are the unique aspects of your group’s ‘Made for This’?  
What skills, gifts and talents are evident in your group?
3. Where do these various passions-discontents-gifts connect to your community?

## WEEK #3: UNDERSTANDING THE POTENTIAL OF GROUPS

### Opening Discussion Questions:

1. How would you define “making a disciple”? When was the last time you can say your group did this?
2. When was the last time you invited someone to group? When was the last time they actually came? How did you get connected to your group in the first place? Has your group been successful about connecting new people?
3. Are we truly helping each other experience Jesus daily?
4. Are we actively helping another group of people far from God experience Jesus?
5. How can we make sure these two things happen in our group? (This is at the heart of “the Shift.” Limit this discussion to a few minutes for now.)

## WEEK #3: (continued)

### Examples of Groups on Mission Exercise: (30 min)

Break out into four different groups and read the following examples of groups on mission. Answer the following questions as a group and then come back together as a larger group and have everyone give a brief summary of what they found.

#### Share with the Whole Group:

1. Give a brief summary of the story.
2. What need was recognized in the community and how did the group fill it? If you were in that group, what would you say was their “mission statement”?
3. What were the benefits? What excited you about how this group operated?
4. If you had to pick 1 or 2 areas this group would fall under in the elements of a City Movement, which would it be?

#### Group 1:

Bret and Stacey were part of a core team of a new church plant. They were naturally outgoing people, enjoyed building new relationships, and already saw themselves as “hosts”. Small group leadership seemed like a perfect fit.

Their strengths came out right away as their group quickly grew, and their living room filled up. Their love for people spilled out onto others, and pretty soon their group was filled with Christ-centered fellowship. Bret and Stacey took their roles as small group leaders seriously. They loved the people in their group, worked hard to build actual relationships, and even developed real friendships with most of them. They even had the privilege of baptizing three group members! Unfortunately because of space concerns, they had to ‘close’ their group.

After two years great years, they began to sense something was missing. They did a service project every other month, but it seemed more like something they just did because they knew they were supposed to. They saw that the true strength of their group was in the relational fellowship that occurred during group time. They knew that people had a need for community, and they were meeting that need. They just felt like there was a lid on the impact they could make.

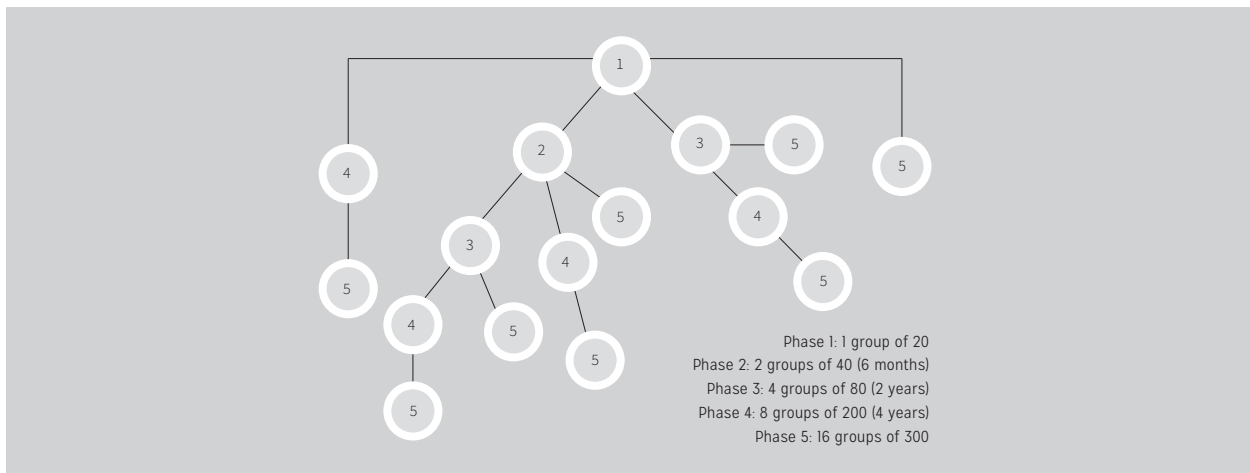


Bret and Stacey asked the pastor for help getting over the hump, and he gave them resources, telling them to think and pray about multiplication. They saw that their passion for fellowship and Christ-centered community could be cross-positioned with multiplication. They decided to build on their strengths and get on a mission.

They started by introducing the idea of multiplication to their group. Many of the people, especially their closest friends, were skeptical. But the enthusiasm and excitement of a fearless leader is contagious, and they decided to hold a group brainstorming session on how to make this happen in their group.

Through much deliberation, and some gnashing of teeth, they set this group goal: We will multiply our group from one to two healthy groups within 6 months.

Bret (ever the adventurous one) reminded them of a book they had read last Fall, called Sun Stand Still. He said, "Let's take this vision beyond our comfort zones," and they changed their goal to multiplying groups that would in turn multiply themselves in 12-18 months. Within 5-7 years, the goal changed from aiming for 1 group of 20, to 16 groups of 300 people. They diagrammed it with measurable goals like this:



They then constructed a plan to make that vision a reality. They knew they needed two things: (1) 16 leaders, and (2) 300 people!

**Leaders:** They wanted to launch healthy groups, so they immediately identified not one, but three potential leaders. That way each group would have 2 leaders even after launching. To help model multiplication, they incorporated breakouts into every group time. Each leader would take smaller groups of 4-5 each week, for a set amount of time, to practice facilitating discussion and organizing group time.

**300 people:** Even though they were "full" now, they knew that if they were going to reach 300, they would have to make bringing in new people as a part of their group DNA. So they came up with three ideas that would help:

## WEEK #3: (continued)

1. Lobby Missionaries: They decided to be a group that treated Sunday mornings as a time to engage people in the lobby, having conversations about groups. They made it a “requirement” for everyone in the group to introduce themselves to someone, get their name, and ask them at some point in the conversation, “Whose group are you in?” If they weren’t in one, they got an invite. If they were, they talked about their respective groups. They built in a report back/story sharing time into their weekly group meetings.

2. Not only who, but how: This was Bret and Stacey’s version of the empty chair. Every week they would have a few people from the group share someone from their life that might be a good person to bring to group. They named names of real people. But they didn’t stop there. They would talk about how they might get them to come, and they would actually do it. Sometimes it was as easy as an invitation; sometimes it meant going bowling or grilling out.

3. Block Parties: They planned block parties for each other and organized one before every launch of a new group. What better place to begin building relationships with potential for bringing them into Christian community than with their actual neighbors!

Bret and Stacey’s group is just underway in this vision. They’ve launched their first group (phase 2), but it has added tremendous value to their group. They have added a Facebook groups page and a bi-annual Reunion Gathering to the original plan, so they can see and track Kingdom growth, and celebrate their mission as they go.


### Group 2:

This group formed nearly 20 years ago. They have literally grown old together. They have moved from a group of 8-12 couples with a cackle of kids, to a group of empty nesters. They bought in completely into the discipleship small group model and saw group time as a time where they could deepen their relationship with Jesus. Over the years they have dug into many studies and have truly grown together both spiritually and as friends.

About a year and a half ago, a new pastor came in and started to talk a lot about breaking out of the Christian huddle. He even introduced a revised mission of the church, changing it to, “Helping people far from God experience Jesus.” A new wave of younger adults is now coming to church, which has energized and excited this group, but they aren’t exactly sure how and where they fit in.

After taking a class called “Live Your Mission”, this group decided to accept a challenge and explore how their group might further the mission of the church in its own unique way.

They ended up deciding together to study 1 Timothy. But instead of the normal approach, they were going to use the trust they had built up over the years to really wrestle through questions about what they were studying. They went all the way back to questions they hadn’t thought about in years, like, “Why should we accept the Bible as the authoritative word of God in the first place,” and, “Who is Timothy?”



And instead of asking, “What does this passage mean to us?”, they decided to ask, “What would this passage mean to someone who doesn’t fully believe in God and Jesus? “How might we clearly explain the truths of Scripture to that person?”

They decided to use the Fall season to create and write a study designed specifically for a non-believer to go through 1 Timothy and explore issues of faith within it. They set a group goal of: Create a 6-week study on 1 Timothy, specifically for people exploring faith.

After finishing it, they showed it to the Pastor. He put it out in the church’s resource center, and the small groups pastor ended up using it in a combined curriculum campaign. The group is looking at seeing if they can get it published to reach a wider audience, and is already looking forward to setting their next missional idea.

### **Group 3:**

Two couples from church have kids on the same baseball team. They sit next to each other at every game and talk about how they would love to join a small group, but they’re just too busy with all the kids’ activities. Besides, they serve on a Kid’s Ministry team on Sunday mornings. Eventually they will join a group, once life slows down a bit.

One day they were challenged by a teaching on living missionally, and decided they could apply it to the baseball team. They came up with a prayer that became a focused goal: “Lord, help us to be the Body of Christ among the parents and families on this baseball team. Help us to love them and to build relationships that will hopefully open up opportunities for us to share the Good News of Jesus with them.” They divided up the names of the boys on the team and committed to pray for each of them on their morning drives to work.

One couple invited the team and parents over to their house to make team shirts. They organized a baked goods sale with other parents from the team, and used the funds to buy appreciation gifts for the coaches.

To their surprise, at the end of the season, several parents approached them and asked what the plans were for the year-end party

**Group 4:**

John had never been to church, but upon hearing about a new church that started in his neighborhood last year, he went on launch day. He fell deeply in love with Jesus and eventually began feeling called to lead.

There was just one big problem: He didn't know where he fit in "church" leadership. He was not a kid guy, and no one had ever accused him of being a people person. He certainly didn't feel like he knew enough answers about questions people might have about faith. He also had a pretty rough past. He had never felt judged by the church, actually he felt just the opposite, but was convinced that if he tried to lead anything, the other shoe would drop.

Then John heard about some grants the church was giving out to help get some community development underway in the neighborhood. On a whim, he applied for \$1,000 to buy an old clunker and some parts, so he could fix up a car and give it to a single mother who lived a few doors down from him. He literally could not believe it when he was informed he would receive the grant money! He called back three times to make sure he had heard right.

He was so excited he just couldn't quit talking to people about it. Pretty soon he had a couple guys from church, a co-worker and two of his buddies from his party days coming over most Friday nights to work on the car together.

John often found himself simply telling stories about how Jesus had changed his life and about the things he was reading in the Bible and praying to God about. These things would just pop up in the normal flow of conversation while working on the car.

It took about 7 months to finish the project, but not one of those men ever forgot the feeling of delivering that car to that mother.

The next Friday, John got a call from one of his unchurched friends that had helped out. He said, "I know this other lady in my neighborhood who could really use a car..."

After that conversation, John decided he would keep the Friday night thing going. He wasn't sure how he was going to get the money for the next clunker and parts, or if all the guys would keep coming back, but he blowtorched a message on his wall that said, "In this garage, we build because we are rebuilt."

**Homework:**

Commit to at least one week of challenging each other to daily reflection on Scripture and prayer. Partners, Facebook, Emails - whatever - come up with a way to make it happen in your group.

## WEEK #4: VALUE OF GROUPS ON MISSION

### Opening Discussion Questions:

1. How does actively participating in the mission of the Church change the dynamic of a group? How does this help to create ownership from everyone in the group?
2. Inside church circles, small groups are well known. However, most people outside the church don't even know what small groups are or why they exist. Do you think that's a problem? How does this challenge you?
3. What value does being "on mission" add to your group? Your church? Your neighborhood? Your community?

### Brainstorm your "Group Mission" Exercise:

First step, briefly review your 'data' from week 1—your group's 'Made for This' and how it connects to your Church's mission and the community. Then, collect any and all ideas for a Group Mission that you can come up with on a giant poster board, white board or similar thing. Once you've collected a BUNCH of ideas, give everyone in the group two dots and have them stick them next to the two ideas they feel are the best fit for the passions and gifts of the group.

### Discussion:

#### Ask these focusing questions:

- What are we trying to achieve?
- What do we most want to accomplish in our group?
- What are the best available opportunities for us?
- What need are we filling in the community?

## WEEK #4: (continued)

**Leader Note: Read the following story as a group**

### A SMALL GROUP STORY

Matthew got connected into a Life Group and eventually decided he was ready to lead a group. He came up with a multiplication plan with the group he was in. Their new group launched out, but unfortunately the group just never gained momentum. Matthew didn't feel like he was in his sweet spot and told his site director that he was stepping down from leadership to focus on the many other areas he was already committed. After reading Group Shift however, he was re-energized to lead a group that connected his passions to fueling a City Movement. Instead of being suffocated by the feeling he had to structure group time in the typical model of small groups, he found freedom in gathering musicians and doing the things he already loved – playing music with others – and using his gift and abilities (what he is Made For) to actively and intentionally impact another group of people far from God for the name and purpose of Jesus Christ. The group has been meeting and rallying around the mission statement: “Our group helps people far from God experience Jesus by creating and performing music.” It's been easy to talk about and create momentum this time around because when people are doing what they are Made For for the sake of Jesus Christ, it's contagious!

**Added Note:** At One Life Church all of our Life Groups own a unique mission statement—the overall goal of this exercise is to help you do the same in your small group. Track with a couple real life examples from our church to help you in the process.

#### Exercise:

**“Name on the Floor” – At One Life when we plant a church we write the names of people we know on the floor – real names of people in our lives who we are responsible for who we want to come to know Jesus. These are people who are far from God and represent the mission of the church.**

**As a group, build a profile of the person you hope to reach with your group mission. Then write out names of real people from your life that represent that “profile” and write them down. >> Next week you will put those names on the back of your mission statement.**

#### Homework:

Commit to at least one week of challenging each other to daily reflection on Scripture and prayer. Over the week, write out what you personally think the group's mission statement should be. Actually write it out and bring it in next week ready to share with the group.

## WEEK #5: SOLIDIFY YOUR MISSION STATEMENT

### STEP 1:

Have everyone share the mission statement they came up with over the past week. Write them down and make them visible for all to see.

### STEP 2:

Now it's time to get in the "war room" and discuss it out! Create your rough draft. Here are some guiding principles:

1. Mission statements need to be one sentence.
2. Would someone outside of our group be able to read and comprehend our mission statement, even if we weren't there to explain it?
3. How would we communicate our group mission in a way that inspires others?
4. Double check that it touches the heart of the core mission, vision and values of your Church.

### STEP 3:

Five Why's. Now that you have your rough draft, ask 'why' this is your mission statement, why you want to do this in the first place. Then ask why again. And again! Ask 'why' five times to get to the bottom, to the heart of your group's mission.

## WEEK #5: (continued)

### A SMALL GROUP STORY

Natalie has been in a Life Group for years. She already leads and is involved in so many areas in the church; it just made sense for her group time to be an experience where she did not have to lead. However, there was a growing sense of unease within her. For Natalie, something was missing from her group experience. Group Shift brought her discontentment into focus and she decided she wanted to launch a new group that connected her 'Made for This' to the mission of the church. But she wasn't exactly sure how this should be expressed. She knew she wanted to do something with kids and was excited about Uncharted globally and Community One locally. She met with her site director to talk through a launch strategy and her group's mission. He asked her why she wanted to serve through Uncharted and do Community One projects. It came down to the life changing moment she had while on a mission trip in Myanmar, where she came face to face with the reality that millions of children live their day to day lives in need. They don't even have their basic needs met--they don't even have enough time in their life to experience Jesus because they are worrying about having enough to eat. Her group's mission became crystal clear after that: "Our group will help people far from God experience Jesus by serving kids in need." She found the 'why' at the heart of her unique expression of our church's mission.

### STEP 4:

**Now make sure your mission is "God-Sized". Reflect on these two quotes and then make the proper adjustments to your mission:**

**"Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen."**

**- Apostle Paul (Ephesians 3:20)**

**"If the size of your vision for your life isn't intimidating to you, there's a good chance it's insulting to God."**

**- Steven Furtick**



## **STEP 5:**

Time to “solidify” your group mission statement

1. Write or print out your mission statement on a document.
2. Write the names of real people from your life that you identified last week on the back.

**SHARE YOUR MISSION STATEMENT AT: [CULTURALCOWS.com](http://CULTURALCOWS.com)**

### **Homework:**

Commit to at least one week of challenging each other to daily reflection on Scripture and prayer. Talk about your group mission with at least one person who is not in your group before you meet again. If the person is in a group – either at yours or at another church – simply talk about your mission. If they aren't in a group, invite them to get in on the mission!

### **FOR NEX TIME YOU MEET:**

**Now that you have your Group Mission Statement, it's time to make that vision become reality. It's time to come up with 5 Goals that will act as measurable steps toward accomplishing your mission. This is the fun part! You decide what you will tangibly and practically do.**

## WEEK #6: CREATING YOUR GOALS

### HERE ARE SOME RULES TO FOLLOW:

1. Set Goals that motivate you. Why do something that no one wants to do?!

2. Set Goals that are SMART:

**SPECIFIC.** Specific goals are not like mission statements. They need to be focused, detailed, clear and provide direction for activity.

**MEASURABLE.** If you can't look back and say whether you met the goal, it's not a good one. Set precise amounts, dates, etc. to know if you are succeeding.

**ATTAINABLE.** While your mission should be God-sized, goals are the smaller steps that take you there that you know you can achieve. Make sure to celebrate what you attain!

**RELEVANT.** Scattered goals accomplish little to nothing. Focus your goals for collective impact. At One Life our filtering system is the elements of the Gospel City Movements. Are your actions contributing to an aspect of the City Movement?

**TIME BOUND.** We are a deadline culture. We just are. So, set timelines to create a sense of urgency that will spur on action and create accountability.

3. Create an Action Plan Timeline. Pull everything onto one sheet or page that makes it very easy for everyone in the group and people outside the group to refer back to.

4. Stick with It! The famous quote, genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration holds true here too. Vision leaks, excitement wanes. Create ways to keep the mission afloat after the initial push.



## **EXAMPLE OF PILOT GROUPS' goals:**

1. Research community gardens (month 1).
2. Decide on a location and plan timelines as a group (month 2).
3. Have a yard sale and take a group offering for seed money.  
Write grants for remaining money needs. (month 3).
4. Have a construction and planting day (month 4).
5. Get neighbors involved and have them own 50% of the beds (months 5-8).

## **Example of Matthew's group Goals:**

1. Recruit and add group members - not limiting to band members, for some people will be made to direct videos, something the group will need, for example.
2. Play out once a month.
3. Write 10 original songs.
4. Begin a PR blitz to include social media avenues to gain a fan base outside of our present circle. Recordings, video, information, photos, calendar, contact info, etc.
5. Have enough songs to play a 3 hr. set (approx. 45 songs).

## **Example of Natalie's group Goals:**

1. Sponsor 6 kids at the Uncharted orphanages in Myanmar.
2. Ensure every child at all the orphanages that Uncharted serves receives 2 new complete outfits each year.
3. Send half the group on mission trips to serve in orphanages in Myanmar.
4. Complete one Community 1 project in Jacobsville that benefits a family.
5. Connect two of our group members to two kids at Delaware or Dream Center in Jacobsville for mentoring.

## WEEK #6: (continued)

Write out your own group's 5 goals to accomplish over the next 6-12 months:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

As you accomplish goals and gather stories, please share them at [CulturalCows.com](https://CulturalCows.com) and on your own social media outlets.



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