

Missional Report

2022-2023



CITYTABLE



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The Work

Transformation is the work!

Praying through Romans 1, that great chapter on the power of the Gospel, I was struck by something I had never seen before in Romans 1:13: “I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.” Paul was going to Rome for a harvest!

This may seem obvious, but what hit me the most was his vision of a Gospel movement and response in the global center of the empire. Rome seemed like the least likely place the movement of Jesus would take root and flourish. It had only been a few decades earlier that Rome had crucified Jesus as a failed political rebel. But yet, Paul knew what faith and a message of hope could do. He went with the eyes of faith, not sight.

- Rome said Caesar was Lord, but Paul believed God would produce a harvest of new loyalty.
- Rome believed in a pantheon of gods, but Paul anticipated a response to the exclusivity of Jesus.
- Rome believed in military might, but Paul believed God would raise up a new Kingdom citizenship loyal to Jesus, the King,



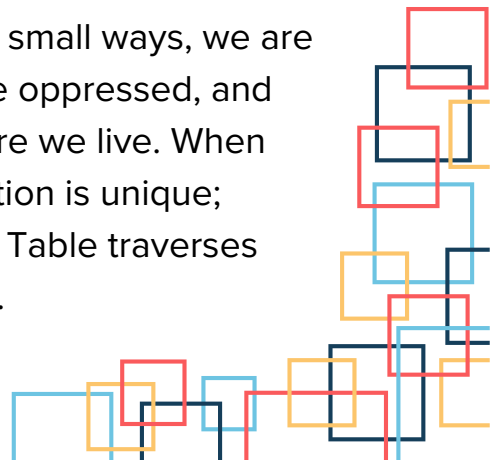
Paul wanted to go because he knew what the Gospel could do. He had seen its power everywhere he had traveled. The seemingly foolish story of a crucified rabbi could cause cultural shame, but if they believed, it could also usher in another Kingdom.

City Table works to help God's people rediscover their God, His heart, His plan, and the power of their transforming Father. He is equipping the family of God to build where they are planted. Jesus, our architect, the only One with the eternal blueprint, is deploying His people to restore His creation and steward His new creation mandate that can be seen woven through Scripture.

The creation mandate is the on-going charge to humanity, in the power and blessing of God, to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and gently subdue and cultivate the earth (Genesis 1:28). One of the primary ways the creation mandate echoes the character of God is in its outward focus, its orientation of doing good to others and to the world at large.



God calls people to seek the welfare of the city, or in other words, the society in which He has placed them. Through their work and other activities, they can contribute to the economic welfare and cultural enrichment of their society. In all cases, whether in big or small ways, we are invited to advocate the cause of the marginalized and the oppressed, and promote peace and social righteousness in the land where we live. When we are invited to help, it is never formulaic as every situation is unique; however, there are a few stages that our work at the City Table traverses through to mobilize this work of renewing God's creation.



We have been at work creating a four-stage approach to helping the family of God broker transformation and renew creation.

Stage One: Create Tables in cities to help individual leaders working separately in silos connect with others to pray, listen, and engage missionally together in the work the Spirit directs.

Stage Two: As the Table group starts to know their city, those relationships deepen, friendships form, love grows, and the group moves from a group to a family. They workshop and do small projects together.

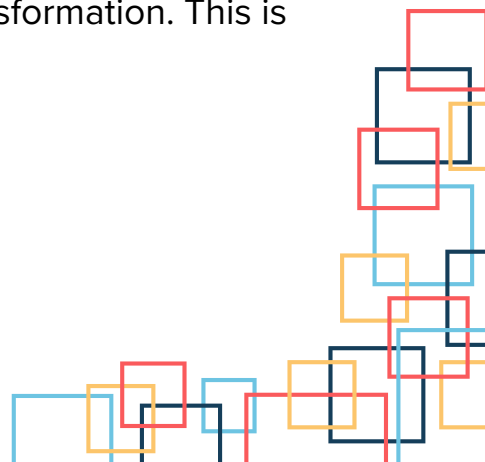


Stage Three: The Table experiences our “Greenhouse Training,” which helps incubate collectively the seeds of God’s Kingdom. This creates longer-term strategies, as each leader knows the talents and strengths of the others. These talents flow together with far more influence on the city as a whole.

Stage Four: That team evolves further to become a Task Force or (in spiritual terms) a Transformation Team of Lead Servants who work as God's family in the city to resource a unified Church to transform the city.

This is the start of the foundation-laying work of City Transformation. This is why we go!

Much love, Jon and Ken



The Table

What if the next move of God is around tables, not platforms?

We call ourselves the City Table, but the Table is much more than our name. The Table is a real description of the Church in the city. When believers come together in sincere worship and genuine community to accomplish part of the mission of God, they are the Church.

Imagine a movement in your city where a table becomes the setting to gather, to pray, and to learn the ways of the Kingdom together. When we see worship, community, and mission overlap, we are seeing the Church of Jesus.

We affirm the Table as a form of the Church--the most basic expression of the Church. Our ecclesiology is simple. When believers work together in sincere worship and genuine community to accomplish part of the mission of God, they are the Church.

This year we have modeled the Church at the Table in Castle Rock, Colorado where we live, and we have done the same as we began our work in Denver and Nashville. These Tables will multiply, and in time, we will see a network of Tables discipled and equipped to engage the city.



The Church in the city is a network of churches collaborating together to see the Gospel's advance. It is a reunified Church. We encourage church planting and unity in God's Church. The speed of the Gospel in a city is in proportion to the depth of unity between members of the same ecosystem.



The Cities



This year we engaged the city of Kansas City in partnership with Navah Church. NAVAH is an ancient word that means “home.” More precisely, it’s a verb that means “to find rest, to bring home, and to make beautiful.” The vision at Navah is Jesus transforming hearts, homes, neighborhoods, and nations until the whole world is beautiful.

City Table was invited this year to help Navah Church form a missional framework that helps those at Navah discover and mobilize their missional contribution. Everyone at Navah Church is now working to create their own intrinsic missional statement. When your intrinsic missional statement is discovered, you recognize purposeful acts (practices) that you employ to live your missional contribution.

Over the course of several months, we developed a missional resource team to serve their network of home churches. The goal was to begin engaging their identified missional fields with their intrinsic missional contribution.



Defining clear missional fields allows Navah to initiate and strategically direct their missional practice for citywide impact. These 12 fields will help the network of home churches partner with city government, non-profit agencies, the marketplace, and stakeholders to broker city transformation. The goal is to holistically address both spiritual and practical needs through coordinated initiatives, programs, and partnerships tailored to each targeted field.





This year, City Table launched a Greenhouse training course in Denver, Colorado to help a network of churches discover a framework to engage their city together. The Greenhouse course took place over 9 months. The learning was an invitation to celebrate our diversity while rediscovering our unity in Christ and Christ alone.

We gave a biblical framework for the Church in culture. After centuries of not engaging culture, God is inviting His people to become benefactors to our culture. Where we have historically separated into the “Salvation” and “Social Gospel” camps, the Father is calling us to embrace a “full Gospel” – a salvation in Christ that promotes “good works” to our cultures, “that they may see your good works and glorify the Father which is in heaven.”

This group of Next Generation leaders have grown in vision and unity for their city. They have launched a 24/7 prayer room where they pray and seek the Lord together and pray for their city. In the coming months, they will identify how they will engage the city of Denver.

Our Denver Greenhouse cohort also hosted a City Table Story Lab in Denver this year. Story Lab is a weekend workshop that City Table offers to help others go on the journey of self discovery. This workshop helps individuals frame their mission, vision, and practice for engaging the city. Story Lab is a great prerequisite for joining a Greenhouse cohort.





This Spring, we launched a Greenhouse training course in Nashville as a seed for birthing other City Tables. Picture a table with civic, Church, and marketplace leaders dedicated to reaching their cities - together. These hungry-hearted leaders are imagining how they can seek the welfare of their city together.

The Nashville Cohort is now planning to launch a second Greenhouse cohort to expand the growing team of leaders who want to collaborate to engage the city. We have seen business leaders, pastors, and civic government leaders learning together to "be like Jesus" and "do like Jesus."

We have been invited to help consult with the Tennessee office of Faith Based Initiatives. During our time working in Nashville, we have been able to develop a collective impact model that can be used to help encourage transformation in the state by forming a network of community members, organizations, and institutions who advance equity by learning together, aligning, and integrating their actions to achieve systems-level change.



That's the work of God's Church and the nature of God's Kingdom. A captive people can become free to bring human flourishing. They can bring heaven to earth in the middle of the empire's system (oikonomia). Eden's mandate to be fruitful and multiply is the norm for God's stewards (oikonomos). Peace, the Shalom of God, is the stated goal of God's people. We are to seek for the things that bring peace and bring it to all the residents of the city. This is the power of collective impact for transformation.



The Tools

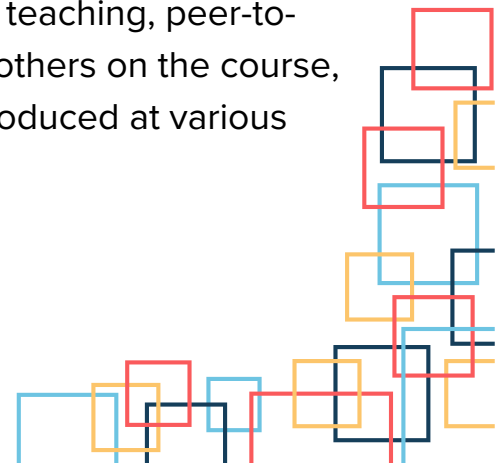
The Greenhouse

The Greenhouse training course functions as a learning community. It helps the city cohort begin to see the bigger picture and map root causes of spiritual, social, and organizational issues with all affected stakeholders.

The Greenhouse learning is organized into three areas of focus. The first is helping build a biblical framework for city transformation. The second is helping to frame benefaction to the culture and seeking the welfare of the city. The third is forming a city team and introducing our transformation approach. This gives the cohort the opportunity to seek God for His unique strategy for their respective city.

The learning community approach helps us facilitate a learning space to prototype early versions of possible solutions, connect real stakeholders, and embody change so that ideas do not remain ideas but become grounded in real-world input. We believe that real-world situations can enable deep learning. This process makes taking risks less costly. The support and contribution to the learning community will help others in their transformational development.

Our learning community includes three learning inputs: teaching, peer-to-peer learning by freely offering their input and ideas to others on the course, and the use of able facilitators and mentors that are introduced at various times in the learning pathway.



Story Lab

Story Lab is a facilitated, weekend event that helps individuals author their missional story – the story you were meant to live. During our weekend together, people discover how to create a vocation that is less about what they do and more about who they are. The arc of the weekend helps individuals write a V-MAP (Vision, Mission, and Practice).

There is an unfolding story in which God desires His sons and daughters to participate with Him in the restoration of all things. The Story Lab is a great prerequisite for those interested in our Greenhouse course.

Resource Hubs

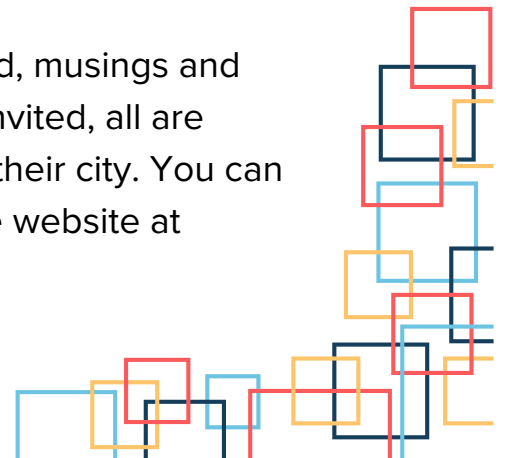
City Table has a design framework for helping city teams create a city resource hub. These hubs exist to resource a city with collaborative networks of churches who prayerfully in unity work together for city transformation. Our framework focuses on the following five areas to bring social transformation to the city and beyond:

- Resource people as change agents.
- Support people in their process of personal growth.
- Facilitate opportunities for collaboration and networking.
- Create space to incubate transformational initiatives.
- Inspire and develop ideas that promote social righteousness, peace, and redemption.

The PodCast

The City Table Podcast features stories, lessons learned, musings and humor. It serves as a library of episodes where all are invited, all are encouraged, and all are released into God's dream for their city. You can find direct links to all episodes by visiting the City Table website at

www.citytable.org



Praying for Your City

Let's pray for our cities. When we pray to the God who says we cannot even begin to imagine the things He has prepared for those who love Him (1 Corinthians 2:9) and who earnestly seek Him (Hebrews 11:6), it is reasonable to conclude that God wants Christians everywhere to pray for their cities.

Lets pray not only for the flourishing of our city's churches and their evangelistic witness, but also for the life of the city—for the health of its economy and the justice of its governance. Here is a list to help you join us in prayer.

- Our Spiritual inheritance to be restored in lives and families.
- A place where we see an end to selfish agendas because Jesus is acknowledged as Lord.
- A city where crime is reduced, and we see an end to violence and bloodshed.
- A city where young and old walk the streets in safety.
- A city of development, employment, and industry where business will operate with integrity.
- A place that honors its history, respects its environment, and leaves a legacy for generations to come.
- A city of shelter where the orphan and the lonely are placed in families.
- A city known for faithfulness, truth, and justice, and being a great place to grow up and to grow old.
- A city where creative solutions are found for the city's challenges. We proclaim health and healing, peace & prosperity, freedom & creativity.
- A place where everyone has the opportunity to learn and grow to become all that God has created them to be.
- A city and region where Christ is honored and many people will turn to God.



Collective Impact

The social sector often treats problems as either simple or complicated. Collective Impact works to address complex problems. Our City Table model of collective impact requires a strong backbone of partnerships. It requires a common agenda that defines the problem and creates a shared vision to solve it. Collective impact requires continuous communication, building trust, analyzing community problems, and strengthening relationships. Our model works to establish shared measurement to help track progress, allowing for continuous learning and accountability. It fosters mutually reinforcing activities to maximize end results and incubate new initiatives. The Common Framework is a set of principles, ideas, and best practices. Like other approaches to collaborative action, the collective impact approach engages multiple partners in working together to solve complex social problems.



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