

What is The Keystone Project?

The Keystone **Project** is an organic global movement and **network** of churches and leaders committed to the fulfillment of the Great Commission of Matthew (28:18-20). This network developed as the Keystone Project provided training and coaching for churches and leaders to encourage and **facilitate** the launching of disciple-making movements (DMMs) around the world.

The Keystone Project is *not*

- A discipleship training program
- A church planting seminar
- A new method or strategy for ministry

The Keystone Project *is*

- A **philosophy** characterized by **missional** disciple-making
- A return to the roots of biblical Spirit-led Christianity
- A call to **renewal** and **reformation**.

The Keystone Project philosophy has three key biblical contexts:

1. God's Glory – which is *why* we make disciples
2. God's Kingdom – which is *what* we do to make disciples
3. God's Spirit – which is *how* we make disciples.

The Keystone Project is based on three foundational truths:

1. God desires to reveal and manifest His **glory** to all of creation so all may know that He alone is God (1 Cor 15:20-28; Eph 3:8-10; Php 2:9-11; Rev 5:11-14; 21:3). ***God delights in being God!***
2. The Great Commission is the chief means by which God has chosen to reveal His glory at this moment in history (Mt 28:18-20). ***God has chosen to reveal Himself through the kingdom lives of disciples – Spirit-transformed followers of Jesus Christ.***
3. God has given us (His Church) the transforming power of the Holy Spirit to fulfill the mission of the Great Commission (Ac 1:2-8). ***The power of the Church to reach the world with the Gospel is not in our natural structures or efforts, but in our living grace testimonies – our Spirit transformed and led lives.***

Fulfilling these three truths will require ***Spirit-led*** leaders:

- Kingdom Principle: *God works, man rests* (He 4:9-11).
- Kingdom Pattern: *One leads as one follows* (Jn 5:19; 13:15).
- Application: *Spirit-led ministry releases the work of God.*
- Antithesis: *Man-centered ministry promotes the work of men.*

*A **project** is a plan or program designed to achieve a specific aim or goal. It is not a promise of money!*

*A **network** is a group or system of cooperating individuals or organizations.*

*To **facilitate** is to make easy or easier.*

*By **philosophy** we mean a way of thinking.*

*The word "**missional**" means to be on the mission of making disciples - the mission of the Great Commission.*

***Renewal** means to make new. **Reformation** is to make better by removing faults or defects.*

*God's **glory** is the revelation or manifestation that He is God. It is the fullest essence of all that He is as God. It is the display of His infinite worth and magnificence.*

These three foundational truths have three personal applications:

1. I must personally experience the glory of God.
 - “Have I been *born again* of the Spirit?”
 - “Do I have *biblical faith* and *worldview*?”
 - “Have I had a *personal encounter* with Jesus?”
 - “Do I have a *prophetic perspective* of the Scriptures?”
 - “Am I living a *supernatural life* that reflects God’s glory?”
2. I must obey the Great Commission.
 - “Am I a disciple of Jesus Christ?”
 - “Am I living the *kingdom life* of a disciple?”
 - “Am I a *missionary* – one who is on the mission of the Great Commission?”
 - “Does this *mission* define my structures or do my structures define my mission?”
 - “Is the Great Commission the *defining test and measure* of my life and ministry?”
 - “Am I *making disciples who make disciples*?”
3. I must be filled with and led by the Holy Spirit.
 - “Have I received the *life* [zoe] of Jesus?”
 - “Have I been *filled* with the Holy Spirit?”
 - “Am I *continually being filled* with the Spirit?”
 - “Is *following* the Spirit the pattern for my life?”
 - “Am I *free* from condemnation?”
 - “Am I *operating* in my spiritual gifts?”

Our Vision: *The Keystone Project exists to glorify God by multiplying disciples (Spirit-transformed followers of Jesus Christ) in every tribe, tongue, people, and nation (Rev 5:9).*

Our Mission: *The Keystone Project identifies, trains, and coaches leaders to launch disciple-making movements in the nations (Eph 4:11-12).*

The goal of The Keystone Project is to identify, train, and release a new generation of leaders who are equipped to lead the Church and the world for the next 50-100 years.

We are looking for leaders who want to launch movements!

Our Strategy: *The Keystone Project multiplies leaders who will multiply disciples who will multiply churches!*

What is a disciple-making movement? A disciple-making movement is disciples making disciples who make disciples who make disciples who...

What is an organic church multiplication movement? An organic church multiplication movement is the **spontaneous** and un-programmed multiplication of *the Church* through the multiplication of disciples. New local churches are begun as disciples are multiplied.

Spontaneous means occurring or produced by its own energy or force, or through internal causes; happening as a result of natural forces.

Changing the way we think: “We are not planting churches; we are multiplying *the* Church which God planted on the day of Pentecost!”¹ As we multiply disciples we will also multiply churches.

What makes The Keystone Project approach different?

1. It is intentionally universal in application.
2. It emphasizes reproduction and multiplication at every level.
3. It is not dependent on resources, materials, or money.
4. It utilizes visionary as well as equipping training.
5. It uses coaches to facilitate successful implementation.
6. It is goal-oriented rather than process-oriented.
7. It prioritizes mission over structures.
8. It can be done within existing ministries.

One more distinction: The Keystone Project approach is not a step-by-step **strategy** or process because there is *no single way* to make a disciple or penetrate a people group. Many contemporary church planting strategies begin with the planting of a local church and seek to use the church in its organizational form (its programs, meetings, services, events, and properties) to evangelize the community and make disciples. The Keystone Project approach reverses this order, especially in unevangelized areas and among unreached people groups. Jesus did not begin with church programs or structures; **He began by making disciples, knowing those disciples would be the Church.** As you make disciples, those disciples will make other disciples, and they will form new churches and redemptive communities. These new churches will emerge out of the disciple-making movement.

Instead of using the meetings programs, or structures of the church to reach the lost, we use the lives of our disciples. The main evangelistic tool of the Church becomes the transformed lives of its members. *Discipleship is a life not a program!*

Why is this distinction important? Program-based church planting and growth strategies tend to focus on *how Christians meet* and *how we attract people to the meetings*. The meetings often become the central focus of the church’s life and mission. The Keystone Project approach is not concerned with *how we meet*; it is concerned with *how we live*. The focus of our training is on producing Spirit-transformed lives.

Missional disciple-making intentionally produces people who live the kingdom life of a disciple every day. Jesus described such a kingdom life as being “salt” and “light” - having a transforming effect on our immediate context (Mt 5:14). **Changed lives change lives!**

Strategy – an over-reliance on a single strategy can cause us to trust more in the strategy than in the power of the Spirit to transform those we are seeking to reach. Strategies are good tools, but can never replace the working of the Spirit.

Program-based institutional church systems primarily use programs to conduct ministry. Something that is institutional is organized as a whole unit and is often emphasized more than the members, which make up the whole. The temptation is that we work to make the church and its programs successful while neglecting to properly disciple our members.

Program-based church growth strategies are often called “**attractional**” models because they rely on an attractional approach to grow the church.

¹ Notice the distinction between “church” (little “c”) and “Church” (big “C”)!

Here is how The Keystone Project works:

1. Leaders are selected through an application process.
2. Selected leaders receive training in the vision, mission, and equipping skills needed to launch disciple-making movements.
3. Each leader develops his or her own strategy to multiply disciples.
4. They continue to receive coaching and mentoring after the training to help them implement the strategy they have developed.

Training to Launch Movements

Launching disciple-making movements requires training in three essential areas. This training answers the question, “What do leaders need to know and do to fulfill the Great Commission in their regions?”

1. Information – what do we need to know?
2. **Integration** – how do we reproduce it in our setting?
3. Implementation – what do we need to do?

What do leaders need to know to launch movements of disciples?

1. Discipleship – how to make and multiply disciples
2. Church (Body) Life – how to facilitate **body life** and community
3. Ministry Skills and Gifts – how to lead through vision and gifts
4. Bible and Doctrine – how to skillfully handle God’s Word

Discipleship Training

1. Spiritual Transformation – walking in the Spirit
2. Kingdom Living – obeying all that Jesus commanded
3. Missional Disciple-Making – making disciples who make disciples

Church (Body) Life

1. Launching Movements
2. Guiding the Emergence of Redemptive Communities (Churches)
3. Body Life (*Koinonia*)

Ministry Skills and Gifts Training

1. Coaching and Mentoring
2. Spiritual Gifts and Warfare
3. Visionary Leadership Skills

Bible and Doctrine Training

1. Basic Bible Knowledge
2. Bible Interpretation
3. Basic Christian Doctrine

***Integration** means to make whole or complete by adding or bringing together parts. The Keystone Project presents biblical principles, not formulas or methods. Integration is the process of taking those principles and arranging them to work in your situation.*

***Body life** means the relationships and activities of the whole local church under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.*

Redeeming the Language of the Modern Church

The Keystone Project philosophy promotes a major shift in the way the Church engages the lost, calling for the multiplication of Spirit-led followers of Jesus Christ who live radical kingdom lives to reach the unreached. This [paradigm shift](#) requires the development of a pattern of thinking and behavior, which is, in many respects, the *opposite* of the prevailing strategies dominating contemporary mission.

If we are going to launch movements of disciples making disciples who make disciples, we will have to think very differently than we have in the past. Specifically, we will have to recapture the purity of our theology, especially as it defines our understanding of the kingdom of God, discipleship, the Church, and the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the disciple and the work of God.

We will then have to intentionally reconnect our theology to our daily lives, discovering how to actually live what Jesus taught in an exponentially changing world which has become saturated with consumerism, secularism, technology, and the fragmentation of family and community into microtrends and subcultures.

This paradigm shift will begin with our language and the terminology we use. Some commonly used words and terms need to be re-defined or clarified to be more faithful to their theological and biblical meanings. It is essential for the modern Church to reflect on the ramifications of its major theological positions.

For example, what do we mean by “discipleship”? Does the modern use and understanding of discipleship accurately reflect how Jesus and the early Church understood it?

How do we communicate our ecclesiology (our doctrine of the Church) to our communities? Is our major engagement with our local churches accurately portraying the biblical concept of *the* Church to the world? Can *a* church not be *the* Church? What is the work of *the* Church and how does *a* church accomplish it?

What does the kingdom of God look like in a [postmodern](#) culture and world? How does the Church establish the kingdom of God, and what is the relationship between the Church and the kingdom of God?

What does it mean to “be filled with the Holy Spirit”? Is there an active role of the Holy Spirit in a Christian’s life? What is that role? What do we mean by walking in the Spirit or being led by the Spirit?

With so many different theological positions and conclusions in Christendom (the Christian world), and so much information about Christianity available to us, it is essential to know what we mean when we use commonly spoken words or terms. The following glossary establishes the definitions of the main words, terms, and concepts we are using in this manual and The Keystone Project training.

[Paradigm](#) means an example or pattern, and is often used in reference to the way we view the reality of our lives and the world around us. A [paradigm shift](#) refers to a major change in the way we view or understand the world in general or something in particular.

[Postmodernism](#) is a philosophy that challenges traditional (or modern) explanations of the world as being simplistic or arbitrary.

Glossary

Apostles – those who function in an apostolic (missionary) way; not an “office” but an operational gifting given to the Church by the Holy Spirit.

Church and *church(es)* – Church (“big C”) refers to the universal body of Christ; church (“small c”) refers to a local expression of *the* Church.

Disciple – a Spirit-transformed follower of Jesus Christ.

Discipleship – the process of making a disciple; imparting the life of Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit, and guiding the disciple into a life characterized by following Christ in Spirit-led obedience.

Emergent – the spontaneous development of complex systems from the interaction of simple, basic components; emergence occurs when the most basic elements present interact, forming a relational connection which becomes a new entity; missionally, when disciples make disciples and engage in kingdom living with one another, the Church is expanded and churches will emerge (see *Redemptive Communities* below).

Genetic Code – biologically, the set of rules by which information encoded in genetic material (DNA) is translated into proteins by living cells; all living things have DNA, the basic genetic material which makes the organism what it is; spiritually and biblically, the genetic code of Christianity refers to what is needed to *be* a true Christian.

Incarnational – theologically, *the* Incarnation is God becoming flesh in Jesus Christ (Jn 1:14), when God became a man to reach men (Php 2:7); “incarnational living” refers to the disciple embodying the teachings of Jesus in the way he lives, especially before others and in the way he relates to others; it is living in such a way that Christ is made known to those who do not know Him.

Kingdom – the rule of God and its various applications, especially through God’s creative and redemptive purposes; *kingdom living* seeks to establish God’s rule in others by lifting the curse in the lives of those who bear its consequences (e.g., feeding the hungry, praying for the sick, and preaching the Gospel are all kingdom acts designed to establish God’s rule in a person’s or community’s life). Jesus defined this principle in Mt 12:28.

Missional – of or pertaining to the mission; missional means intentionality in mission; to *live* missionally is to intentionally re-prioritize and order your life to make Christ known to those who do not know Him.

Organic – that which is naturally developing or sustaining; organic structures (i.e., in a church) are not built or imposed, they are the natural result of the lives and relationships of those who *are* the Church.

Redemptive Communities - a group of disciples who are committed to one another and to God’s redemptive purposes; redemptive communities will have many different forms and expressions depending on their setting and role in the mission (groups, cells, teams, networks, churches, etc.).

Intentionality is the state of having or being formed by a deliberate act; to make happen.