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Transformative Christian
Leadership Series

VISION

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Focus On Mission:
Transformative Christian
Leadership Series

VISION

KENT R. HUNTER

with TRACEE J. SWANK

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Scripture references in this book are from *The Message* version. Why? According to the brilliant translator, Eugene Peterson, it's not meant to be a scholarly study Bible. It's meant to be a life-learning, engaging Bible that helps you to appropriate God's teaching to everyday life. God's plan is to effectively change your life through the divine power of His Word.

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Introduction

A man who was born blind was asked, “What could be worse than being blind your whole life?” His response was, “It would be worse if you had sight but no vision.”

In Proverbs 29:18, the Scripture is translated, “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (KJV). In that verse, the word “vision” is reflective of spiritual insight. Apparently, from God’s perspective, we can have perfect vision and yet miss the wisdom of God. In Christ, that wisdom would be described as *spiritual insight*. Spiritual insight is the miracle of divine vision.

Vision is a key element for effective mission. There is a reason that Jesus walked on water, turned water into wine, raised Lazarus, fed the five thousand, and appeared to others after the crucifixion. You might call it visual spiritual impact.

As a Christian, you can have significant familiarity with your church building, the worship space, and your favorite place to sit for worship. You likely have familiarity with your friends who sit nearby. You likely know the routine of worship. All of that is basic *ministry*.

Beyond *ministry*, there is the spiritual element of *mission*. You likely support the work of the church, which is an important part of mission. Perhaps you serve in some of the functions of your congregation. You recognize that it takes the whole church to function as the church. You are involved in service through your church.

Beyond *ministry* and the *mission*, what is your *vision*? Your vision is how you see ministry and mission translated into your community. This is not simply an occasional thought or even a prayer. It is much more. It is a visionary worldview of how you, together with others from your congregation, impact your community, your nation, and your world.

Your *vision* is the spiritual energy that ignites your spiritual mission. It is an engine that signals your behavior beyond your church. It energizes your prayers for unbelievers in your community—and beyond. It shapes the way you translate the nightly news and empowers your prayers for unbelievers in your social network. Your vision extends to faraway places where people suffer, wars destroy, and diseases kill. You may not be called to go and serve, but you feel called to pray and donate. Your *vision* transports your spirituality to places you may never visit. Yet, you are there in prayer and emotional support.

Your *vision* transports you from spiritual consumer to engaged missionary. The world is your mission field. Why? Because you see through the eyes of Jesus. You touch through the hands of prayer. You are not a spiritual consumer. You *are* a spiritual visionary!

Bringing Light to Darkness: Faith's Role in a Hopeless Society

When the Apostle Paul finally reached Rome, he was treated well in the time before he got to see Caesar. He lived in a house, not a jail, and had a guard living with him. He was free to come and go. He invited the Jewish leaders in Rome to his house. He introduced his talk to them in an interesting way: “I did it *for* Israel. I asked you to come and listen to me today to make it clear that I’m on Israel’s side, not against her. I am a hostage here for hope, not doom” (Acts 28:17-20).

Unbelievers have an idea that faith in Christ is all about rules, laws, and condemnation. Religious people focus on keeping things the same. They don’t like change of nonessentials. For the Jewish leaders, it was the accumulation of centuries of rules and regulations that represented religion, not faith. In our world today, it could be anything as ridiculous as changing the color of the carpet in church, updating an old hymnal, putting screens in the sanctuary, or saying the Lord’s Prayer in language people actually speak nowadays. It’s great to be (and stay) stuck in faith. It’s horrible to be stuck in religion.

The real issue is hope. Secure faith and refreshed religion bring a new sense of hope to the hopelessness of society—even the tyranny of government rulership like Rome in the first century.

Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus Returning the Church to Its True Mission

Throughout history, the Christian movement has followed a cycle of growth and decline. In the early church, faith in Jesus thrived with exponential expansion. In Israel and in much of the Mediterranean world, followers of Jesus Christ multiplied phenomenally. Today, the region is primarily secularized.

Several centuries later, the Roman Catholic movement spread across new trade routes to places like India and South America. With the birth of Protestantism, Christian influence thrived in Europe and North America with early missionary movements to Africa, Asia, and elsewhere.

In the twenty-first century, secularization has overtaken much of Europe and is creeping toward major influence in North America. Yet, Christianity is thriving in many parts of Africa.

What is at the heart of this repeated cycle? One of the great contributors could be called “ecclesiastical drift.” Influenced by human beings, the church drifts from organism to organization. This movement is propelled by *contextualization*, which has been overcome by *syncretism*. These are unique words representing spiritual disaster. As always, getting Jesus—the Head of the Church— “right” is at the heart of revival. Getting Jesus not completely “right” is the foundation for disintegration.

The writer to the Hebrews gets this. The theme: As Christ-followers, we travel on the *Way* (life with Jesus). Sadly, as humans, we often *get in the way*. Back to basics: In Hebrews 2:14-15, the writer says, “Since the children [of God] are made of flesh and blood, it’s logical that the Savior took on flesh and blood in order to rescue them by his death.” This is technically called the “incarnation”—Jesus became meat like us: flesh and blood.

The incarnation is a powerful missionary concept. It has tremendous impact on the effectiveness and the power of the Christian movement. This is called *contextualization*. Jesus entered our human context.

The incarnation demands that faith be *expressed* in the realities of the audience you are trying to reach. This is where well-meaning church people often go off the rails. The Catholics perpetuated Latin as the language of faith for centuries. Many American churches are still built to look like miniaturized European cathedrals from a century long gone. Many Christians still sit in pews, long after better seating has been invented. Many worship services perpetuate songs, called “hymns,” using words like “Thee,” “Thy,” and “Thou”—old English words they don’t even use in their daily context, even in England!

The faith becomes “foreign” to unbelievers. This is an abomination to the incarnation. It becomes religion, not faith. It is like hanging on to the *delivery systems* of faith, not the *basics* of the faith. It is an obsession with peripheral Christianity. It causes spiritual and missional dry rot for the movement.

Meanwhile, many Christians, following a misguided understanding of contextual mission, practice “syncretism.” This is the effort and attempt to “sync up” with secular, non-

biblical practices that are contrary to Scripture. This is the drift toward the liberalism of theology that leads off the cliff of disaster and paralyzes the Christian movement.

All this makes you wonder: “Can we just do faith by the Book?” In Hebrews 3:1, the writer to Hebrews nails it: “...take a good, hard look at Jesus. He’s the centerpiece of everything we believe, faithful in everything God gave him to do.”

Keeping the Church on Course: Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Faithfulness

Spiritually healthy Christians make vibrant, productive, mission-minded churches. Yet, every Christian—and every church—is subject to drift. Sometimes the missteps are bold and obvious. More often, they are subtle and incremental.

In 2 John 4-6, the apostle writes, “I can’t tell you how happy I am to learn that many members of your congregation are diligent in living out the Truth” (verse 4). Notice that John says “many” of the members—not all! What is the point? Jesus is perfect; His Church is not. Jesus is the Head of the Church, but from the neck on down, it can be a mess. You could say that it’s enough to give Jesus a headache—since He really is the “Head” of the Church!

When you were a kid, did you learn the song “Jesus Loves Me”? He not only proved that on the cross, but He also proves that every day in churches around the world.

There are two sides to this reality: The first is called **orthodoxy**. It represents a *commitment* to what the Bible teaches. It seems like a no-brainer, but there are many churches that teach a watered-down version of the “Truth” the apostle John was talking about. This raises the questions: “How?” or “Why?” Some of it is ignorance of biblical teaching. Perhaps more of it is what is called syncretism. This is the practice of “watering down” the truth of Scripture to “sync up” with culture, usually

with the intent to not offend unbelievers. It doesn't work! People are not attracted to a body of Christ that doesn't have a backbone. If you can believe in anything, even to a degree, why bother?

The other area of drift is called ***orthopraxy***—the practice of effective mission and ministry. When it comes to the health and vitality of churches, the whole Christian movement—the drift from effective practices—is likely the greater contributor to the decline of the Christian movement. This is the area of strategy or effective mission. This drift always has its origin in a departure from effective mission and ministry. “Religion” defines the way we approach God’s work. It takes shape in the *forms* we use: the design of buildings, language patterns, dress codes, styles, etc. When Jesus came in the flesh, it was called the “incarnation.” Jesus—God—showed up in the flesh, looking like the first-century people in Israel. God wants to place no extra roadblocks or hurdles in the way of people connecting with Him. Jesus was both “efficient” in doing things right and “effective” at doing the right things.

So, in what areas do churches move away from truth the most? Where is the greatest drift?

- Worn-out, ineffective delivery systems (worship styles, language, facilities, etc.)
- Drift of clear purpose—“to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10 NIV). Instead of being fishers of men, many churches spend most of their energy as keepers of the aquarium.
- Discipling—equipping people for ministry through on-the-job training. Many churches spend most of their energy preaching, teaching, and providing programs.

- Volunteerism—the failure to equip people to do the work of ministry based on their spiritual gifts.
- Bureaucratic structures rather than church body life. Many churches superimpose secular corporate structures of government and change the movement of Christianity into a program of activity.
- The failure to multiply churches through the multiplication of disciples who are disciplers, and who represent a movement

Drift paralyzes the growth of God's Kingdom. And when it comes to truth, that is the *truth!*

Rooted in God: Aligning with His Movement, Not Ours

Many Christians love Jesus but work the system backwards. To be sure, because they love Jesus, they are forgiven. Their eternity, by God's grace—*through* God's grace—is assured. Yet these same believers are, practically, no earthly good!

Oh, they are often good fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters and good church members, as it goes. But they aren't great church *doers*—they don't "do" church effectively. This is where the Church fails in mission and ministry. It is one reason the Church loses ground in a culture. Here's how it works—or, actually, doesn't work—not very well. There are these Christians that dream up a scheme, a goal, an activity that sounds "good" to do. But they fail to ask, "Is it a God thing to do?" There are a lot of good things unbelievers can do. But only God-followers can do "God things."

A second issue is that many Christians in churches come up with an idea and then pray like crazy for God to bless it. On the other hand, when we pray the Lord's Prayer, we say, "Your will be done" (Matthew 6:10 NIV)—God's will is what we want to do! Yet, instead of dreaming or scheming up an idea about what to do next, we should be *watching* where God is moving—*looking* to see what He is doing—and join Him there. We should become *God watchers*.

In Romans 11:13-18, Paul laments, wishing his own people would “get in on what God is doing.” See the difference? You know the story: The Jews had collected so much religious activity that they were “getting in” on what they were doing religiously but missing out on what God was doing in Jesus Christ.

Paul uses great picture language. He says, “Behind and underneath all this there is a holy, God-planted, God-tended root” (Romans 11:16-18). It is the primary root of a tree. As a holy root, the tree produces holy fruit. What else? Of course, the branches are pruned to produce more fruit. Fruit is important to God. Fruit should be important to Christians. Fruit should be important to churches. Fruit should be of vast importance to denominations.

Paul summarizes this section in Romans with these words: “Remember, you aren’t feeding the root; the root is feeding you.” So, is that true for you? Is that true for your church leaders? Are you coming to conclusions, making decisions, and moving into action based on feeding on the root? Are you watching where God is moving and looking for where God is moving?

Our research shows that only half of the people in churches—and church leaders, too, sadly—read the Bible one time or more per week. Less than half are in Bible study. Less than half even know about the Great Commission.

When we encourage churches to choose leaders from among those who show a lifestyle of “feeding on the root”—Bible study—some people look at us like we’re crazy! The Apostle Paul wouldn’t think so!

What do you think? And what do you do? What do you feed on? Honestly, you can't run a healthy, productive, fruit-bearing church, mission, or ministry unless people are feeding on the root. Is the root feeding you?

Running After God: Embracing Our Mission

Did you ever fall asleep in church? The last church I served as pastor was a small rural congregation. I worked half time and wrote books and developed Church Doctor Ministries half time. In that church there was a wonderful man named Hugh. He was the owner of a large excavating company. He was also a devoted Christ-follower.

When I preached, however, about halfway through my message, Hugh would often fall asleep. I took it as a challenge. I added more appropriate humor to my sermons. I used more visual aids. And sometimes I even dressed up as a biblical character and gave the message from that perspective. However, even then, sometimes Hugh would occasionally doze off! I never said anything about it. But to be honest, I was a little offended. Maybe more frustrated than anything else.

One day in the spring, Hugh's older daughter graduated from high school, and they had an open house. It was crowded with lots of people. I went by the door to the patio, and there was Hugh, on the couch, dozing off—with people all around! Later, I learned that it wasn't about my preaching at all! Even so, in a roundabout way, it greatly improved my preaching!

I wonder how often we church people are really listening to God. In fact, in the book of Revelation, at the end of chapter 3, the Lord says, "Are your ears awake? Listen. Listen to the Wind

Words, the Spirit blowing through the churches” (Revelation 3:22). Have you ever wondered if your church is really hearing all that God is saying? Are you? In Revelation 3:19, it says, “The people I love, I call to account—prod and correct and guide so that they’ll live at their best. Up on your feet, then! About face! Run after God!”

So, do you see your church—do you see yourself—*running* after God? Running to do God’s work in your community? Running after those who don’t yet have a relationship with God?

The next verses are familiar to most Christians: “Look at me. I stand at the door. I knock. If you hear me call and open the door, I’ll come right in and sit down to supper with you” (verses 20-21). Then the Lord calls His people using a very interesting word. He calls us “conquerors.” He says, “Conquerors will sit alongside me at the head table.... That’s my gift to the conquerors!”

I’ve heard Christians called many things: “followers,” “believers,” “children of God,” even “church members.” But “conquerors”?

It is right after this that the Lord asks, “Are your ears awake?” (verse 22). So, what do we as “conquerors” conquer? Sin? Sure! Forgiveness through Christ’s death on the cross? For sure! Death? Oh, yes! By the resurrection of Jesus and His promise that we, too, will rise on the last day. Conquerors of the Enemy? For sure, somewhat in our life of struggles and, ultimately, completely.

Do you wonder, since this part of Revelation was written to *churches*, what is it our churches conquer? We sing, or at some time in the past we have sung, “Onward, Christian Soldiers.” We march into battle—into war. How well do we “win” others?

How much do we conquer? How much time and effort do we put toward conquering beyond our own personal battles? How much effort does our church make to conquer the land for the Lord? How many people do we lead to Jesus and conquer them for heaven? What priority do we give to conquer our land for Christ? And how effective are we? Do we live up to the title of “conquerors”? What is God saying to us? And what are we going to do about it?

Seeing the World Through Faith: The Tension of Belief

The more you learn about God, the more you read Scripture, the more challenging life seems to become. When Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36 NIV), He was declaring that much of what we become, as people of faith, is in tension with much of the world in which we live. That becomes a struggle between many worldly assumptions and what God teaches us in Scripture. The more you grow in faith, the more you see the world differently than others who are not believers do.

In 1 Corinthians 10:12, Paul challenges the people in the church at Corinth: “Cultivate God-confidence.” The word “confidence” comes from the Latin. It means, literally, “with faith.” That rules out knowledge, fads, popular opinion, and all the rest.

So, how do you cultivate confidence in God? The first approach is to become an expert about what God says. The way to do that is to read the Bible, regularly, for life. Read it over and over again. You might question: Why the redundancy? (1) You are a different person than when you read it last. (2) Each time you read it, you come at it with a different perspective. You’ve grown in depth from the last reading. (3) If you use different modern translations, you will learn that different Bible scholars translate the Bible with different words. They can be different and all correct because they are unpacking huge concepts. As you keep reading the same book, over and over, in different

translations using different language, you are even more prepared for life. You've had different experiences, different challenges, and different struggles. Collectively, over a lifetime, your continued and repetitive reading gives you added perspective.

Paul then acknowledges, in 1 Corinthians 10:13, that whatever you're going through, others have gone before you—through the same stuff. He says you are not alone in your journey. He notes that no matter what you go through, God won't let you down.

Sometimes we get so focused on ourselves, we lose our focus on Jesus. Perhaps that is why the Apostle Paul shares an excellent warning in 1 Corinthians 10:15-18: "We don't reduce Christ to what we are." That's not the way faith works. Instead, he says, "...he raises us to what he is." That is an entirely different approach to life!

When was the last time you verbally put Christ in charge of you? When was the last time you diminished yourself and made Christ the leader of your life? Wouldn't that be a great way to start every single day?

Singular Vision: How Unity Fuels the Church's Mission

Years ago, we led a team of church leaders to teach a conference for pastors and missionaries gathered in the convention center in Almaty, Kazakhstan. This region of the world is at the western end of the Soviet Union, near the western border of China, and has several Muslim-dominated countries nearby.

In conversation with some of these church leaders, it became clear that many were career missionaries from all over the world. We asked, "Do you cooperate with one another?" Our Russian translator summarized their response: "On the mission field, you either hang together or you hang all by yourself."

In Philippians 1:27-30, Paul writes, "Meanwhile, live in such a way that you are a credit to the Message of Christ." He continues: "Stand united, singular in vision, contending for people's trust in the Message, the good news, not flinching or dodging in the slightest before the opposition."

This is not a call for another ecumenical movement where every brand or expression of Christianity is homogenized into one massive structure. Unique styles of ministry reach a wide range of people. But it does reflect a united front, as Paul says, standing united with a "singular vision." Vision is the key to effective mission. It reflects having the same view toward the same mission: winning the world for Jesus Christ. Consider this:

Does Christianity in your corner of the world reflect a united front?

A pastor once made a comment about a midsize city in which a group of pastors were invited to come together to pray for the city. This pastor reported that they couldn't get most of the pastors to do it. When asked, "Do they just feel they're too busy?" He said, "Most of the pastors don't trust the others."

It is so interesting to visit different churches and learn what God is doing, how He is working, where He is blessing. There is the true story about a church where the pastor, in an inappropriate and arrogant approach, tore down other church pastors in their small city, charging them as false teachers. Someone asked if he had visited these churches or talked privately with the pastors. He said he hadn't!

The old joke is, "We need to build two church buildings for our congregation: one to go to and the other to stay away from." Except this is no joke! It is bad theology and a horrible strategy. It is also an awful witness to unbelievers.

It's OK to stand for "correct Bible teaching." But if you have an offense with other Christians or churches, follow Jesus' plan in Matthew 18: Go talk to your perceived offender privately.

Any team in sports, any successful company, any healthy country, any productive effort must be unified, or it is headed for a losing season. Unity is not conformity. You can have different strategies. But you must stand firm together on the basics of mission. This is what Paul calls being "singular in vision." It is the key to winning the world for Christ.

The Bigger Picture: How God Works for Good in All Circumstances

Ever wonder why bad things happen to good people? In Romans 15, at the end of the chapter, Paul said that he was very excited to see the Christians at Rome. He got there all right, but not as a visitor. He arrived as a prisoner!

He spent his days in prison, falsely accused by the Jews he was trying to reach for eternity! However, while Paul was in jail, Luke visited him. Before his execution, Paul wrote letters to the young Christians in many places around the Mediterranean world. These writings became portions of the New Testament, which has changed the lives—and eternal destinies—of billions of people—and still counting!

Paul never saw the printed results of his letters, his wisdom, and his inspired writings.

So, did he die discouraged? Did he feel like a loser, a failure? Did he let the false accusations by his fellow Jewish leaders destroy his self-esteem and love for God? Was he tempted to swear God off like people today saying, “Goddamn it”? Not a chance! This is the same person who said, in Romans 8:28 (NIV), “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” It is entirely appropriate to add what Paul’s life implies: “God works for good, whether you figure it out or not!”

What Really Matters: The Eternal Gift of God's Grace

Why do many people put so much stock in human knowledge? We are so arrogant about human theories and build whole systems of conclusions on presumptions that are not proven. At the other extreme, many blow off what God says, what Scripture makes clear, and they have never read, studied, or thoroughly considered what is in Scripture.

Paul describes a blind approach to reality in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31. He says there are so-called “educated” and truly educated people, smart people and really intelligent people. Scripture has a different grading scale, a different lens. You could say that there are people who are “smart” and those who are smart *and* wise. Much of the world has “pop wisdom”—what’s popular. That’s a fact that not only passes the test of time but also produces the “exam” of eternity.

So, God takes what the world often labels “stupid”—preaching Christ—and provides eternal salvation. There are plenty of examples. In 1 Corinthians 1:22-25, Paul names some: The *Jews* want Jesus to perform miracles to prove His worth—like a dog who gets a treat for doing some cute trick. The *Greeks* are hungry for human wisdom. But the real deal is the miraculous wisdom of God and Jesus crucified: He takes our place, our punishment, and our pain. That is God’s ultimate miracle.

Jesus Christ is God's ultimate miracle, God's wisdom in the flesh. It sounds so ordinary, yet it's extraordinary: Jesus coming from God, taking the punishment we deserve. That's eternally profound! Next to that, human wisdom is impotent, puny, and absurd.

What else is beyond comprehension? We don't deserve it, earn it, or expect it—not even close. You don't have to be a genius or a gazillionaire, business tycoon, rocket scientist, movie star, celebrity, or beauty contest winner to get in on God's love. He loves and dies for “nobodies” to prove He is really Somebody.

Here is what you get as a free gift: right thinking, right living, a clean slate, a fresh start, a new life, a promise of eternity. It's all given through God's gift of Jesus Christ.

The world gets the credit, takes the spotlight, seems to be in control. Mental geniuses with their half-baked theories ignore God and get the spotlight, the press, the human prizes. So, what do Christians get? Everything that really matters, right now and for eternity.

Conclusion: Small Group Study

Vision is more than what you see inside the church building. It is how you see your community, your nation, and your world through the eyes of Jesus. Throughout this study you have been reminded that the Christian movement is always vulnerable to drift, from organism to organization, from faith to religion, from mission to maintenance. God is inviting you to a different posture. He calls you to feed on the root of His Word, to fix your eyes on Jesus as the centerpiece, and to live as “conquerors” who carry hope into a world that feels increasingly dark and confused.

As you reflect on these sessions, consider how God is reshaping your vision. You are not just a spiritual consumer; you are a spiritual visionary who has been placed in your community on purpose. Vision fuels mission, and mission translates into practical action that real people can see and experience. That includes the way your church worships, organizes, communicates, and serves, but even more, it includes how you and your group run after God in everyday life. The question is not only, “What can our church do?” but, “Where is God already moving, and how will we join Him there?”

Your next steps will require courage, creativity, and collaboration. This means honestly naming where drift has occurred, where religion has replaced faith, and where “delivery systems” have become more important than the people you are

called to reach. It means seeking unity with other believers in your city, not uniformity, so that together you present a singular vision of hope in Christ. It means learning to read Scripture not only for personal comfort, but also for missional direction so that your gifts, resources, and relationships are leveraged for Kingdom impact far beyond your walls.

As a group, you are encouraged to keep going. This session is not the finish line. It is a launching point. Continue reading the rest of the *Focus On Mission* series together, and let each chapter refine your vision, stretch your imagination, and shape concrete action steps for your church. Pray, plan, experiment, and evaluate together. Ask the Holy Spirit to keep your hearts rooted in God's truth and your eyes open to the opportunities around you. Then step out, trusting that God is already at work and will use your obedience to bring light, hope, and transformation where you live.

Study Questions

Where do you see signs of “vision” in your church right now, and where do you see signs of spiritual drift from mission into maintenance or mere religion?

If your group looked at your community through the eyes of Jesus this week, what needs, hurts, or opportunities would stand out that you might normally overlook?

In what specific ways could your church update or adapt its “delivery systems” (language, worship, space, communication, structures) so that the Gospel feels more incarnational and less foreign to unbelievers in your context?

How can your group practice being “God watchers,” discerning where God is already moving in your neighborhood or networks, then aligning your plans and resources with what He is doing instead of asking Him to bless your own ideas?

What would it look like for your church to live as “conquerors” in mission, not in a triumphal or aggressive way, but in a way that intentionally “conquers” spiritual darkness with hope, hospitality, and courageous faith in your community?

Where do you sense God calling your church to greater unity with other congregations or ministries in your area, and what practical first step could you take to build trust and collaborate for the sake of the Gospel?

Based on what you have studied so far, what is one creative, entrepreneurial experiment your group could design and launch in the next three months that expresses the heart of this series and helps your church move from spiritual consumption to active mission?



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①

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②

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your church back.

③

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About the Authors



Dr. Kent R. Hunter is the founder of Church Doctor Ministries. He believes that God has called him to help Christians and their churches become more effective for the Great Commission, to reach unbelievers and to make them disciples of Jesus Christ. Dr. Hunter is the author of more than 40 books. He has consulted more than 1,800 churches from 80 denominations, as well as nondenominational and independent churches. He developed the SEND Movement, which trains congregational members to become missionaries to those who are unchurched in their social networks. Kent writes the bimonthly Church Doctor Report, found on www.churchdoctor.org. Kent lives on a tree farm in northeast Indiana with his wife, Janet. Kent and Janet have two grown children, Laura and Jon.



Dr. Tracee J. Swank leads Church Doctor Ministries. She is a certified church consultant, Christian leadership coach, StoryBrand Guide, and Business Made Simple Coach. She works with pastors, ministry leaders, and Christian entrepreneurs to help them fulfill their God-given vision and mission in the Kingdom. Tracee holds a master's degree in theological studies and a Doctor of Ministry in Kingdom entrepreneurship. She enjoys speaking at conferences, leading ministry immersion trips, and mentoring leaders in creative, Kingdom-focused projects. When not traveling for ministry, she resides in northwest Ohio with her husband, Matt, and their black Lab, Beckett. She enjoys gardening, cooking, and cheering for Ohio State University. (Go Bucks!)