

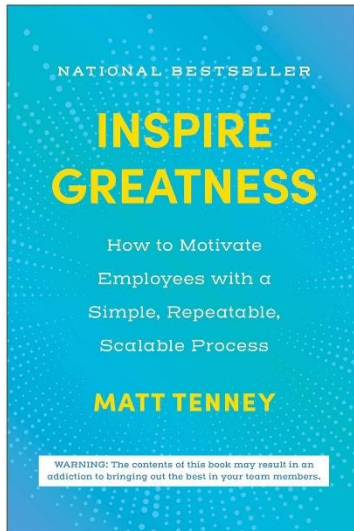
Leader's Edge Summary

April 2026 Summaries

Missio Nexus

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*** Leadership ***



Inspire Greatness – How to Motivate Employees with a Simple, Reasonable, Scalable Process

By: Matt Tenney

Matt Holt Books, 2024

256 pages

[Find it on Amazon*](#)

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Summary

Matt Tenney is a consultant and speaker/teacher for numerous Fortune 500 companies in the areas of leadership development, engagement, performance, and retention. Since 2012, he has published several books including the present volume, which has made the USA Today and Publisher's Weekly bestseller lists. The book argues that leadership tends to be thought of as an art, not a science, and stimulates the reader to consider the benefits of having an algorithm for it—a repeatable process based on decades of research on what motivates employees—that any leader can follow to consistently inspire greatness in others.

Inspire Greatness offers a four-step process that can enable leaders to bring out the best in team members and improve performance by:

- Taking responsibility for employee engagement and acting from the premise that leaders' primary job is to inspire greatness in team members.
- Identifying what team members need to thrive and do great work.
- Collecting regular feedback on how well direct supervisors are meeting 14 universal needs people have for being engaged at work.

Pairing feedback for leaders with bite-size learning that is easy to consume and act on immediately.

Best Idea

“Although the term ‘employee engagement’ was first used in the 1990s, the concept has existed for as long as people have led teams. An engaged employee is an employee who is emotionally invested in her work and willing to give discretionary effort. In other words, an engaged employee is a motivated employee who is willing to go the extra mile to do great work and accomplish the mission.

Employee engagement has been formally measured by the Gallup organization since the year 2000. As you may be aware, when Gallup first started measuring employee engagement, the numbers were terrible. In 2001, in

the US, only 30 percent—roughly one out of three employees—were engaged at work. Fortunately, we have an abundance of research conducted over the last fifty years that has provided very clear evidence for exactly what motivates employees and drives employee engagement in the workplace.” Kindle location 10-11

Best Illustration

“I interact with people who often talk about how ‘crazy busy’ they are. These people tend to be the least productive people I know. They engage in lots of activities, but don’t produce a lot of value. Conversely, some of the most productive people I know don’t appear to be busy at all.

Warren Buffett is known for doing very little. He has spent most of his time throughout his career reading and thinking. But when he does act, he produces huge results. By Western standards, he is one of the most productive people of all time. As of this writing, his company, Berkshire Hathaway, is worth \$685 billion, the sixth most valuable company in the world. There’s also a large body of research suggesting that working long hours is not only bad for well-being, but it doesn’t increase productivity.” Kindle location 109-110

Best Take Away

“The primary job of a leader is simply this: to inspire greatness in one’s team. In a groundbreaking study conducted by Harvard researchers J. P. Kotter and J. L. Heskett, they tracked 207 publicly traded companies over a period of eleven years. They compared companies that made it a top priority to take good care of employees and bring out the best in them versus companies that were almost entirely focused on profit. The people-focused companies outperformed their profit-focused competitors by a huge margin. Over eleven years, on average, the people-focused companies increased their net income by 756 percent. The profit-focused companies increased their net income by only 1 percent.” Kindle location 24

“Universal Needs for Thriving at Work: Following are the fourteen universal needs people have for thriving at work (for being great, happy human beings, who do great work), and for being engaged at work: Appreciation/Recognition: People need to feel recognized and/or appreciated so they know they are making a contribution. Autonomy: People need to feel that they have as much control as possible over their lives. Belonging: People need to feel that they are part of a group with mutual respect and care, and shared values. Clarity of Expectations: A lack of clarity is a significant source of anxiety and frustration. Doing Work That Leverages Strengths: The more time people spend doing work they enjoy and are good at, the more likely they are to be engaged. Excellence: People inherently want and need to do a great job. Feedback: People need regular, helpful feedback. Feeling Like One’s Opinion Matters / Is Heard: People need to feel like their ideas matter. Feeling Cared For by One’s Manager: This is the most powerful driver of engagement, and the foundation for meeting all other needs.” Kindle location 37

“Research from Gallup makes it clear that the organizations with the highest levels of employee engagement and retention are the ones with the most engaged managers who consistently meet the fourteen universal needs people have for thriving and being engaged at work.” Kindle location 43

Our Recommendation

“This book introduces most chapters with a very helpful, extended illustration of a person in the business community who has demonstrated significant achievement in practicing the guidelines in the following content. Clearly written and well-organized, it is sure to stimulate the thinking of leaders engaged in any type of people management, in whatever sphere. Recommended reading.

Best Quotes

“A search on Amazon.com for ‘leadership books’ yields over sixty thousand results. Could there possibly be anything new to say on this subject? I certainly hope there is because, as you’ll discover in chapter one of this book, research from the Gallup organization shows that, on average, we leaders have not improved our ability to lead people at all over the last twenty years.” Kindle location 1

“Over the past ten years, I have spent much of my time searching for a repeatable process leaders could use to create lasting behavior changes that consistently drive high levels of employee engagement and retention.” Kindle location 2

“In Part 1 of this book, you’ll learn a simple, four-step process that I discovered for consistently bringing out the best in team members. In Part 2, you’ll discover behaviors that reinforce these results.” Kindle location 4

Research published in MIT Sloan Management Review ... analyzed thirty-four million online employee profiles to identify US workers who left their employer for any reason during a six-month period in 2021. According to the authors, “A toxic corporate culture is by far the strongest predictor of industry-adjusted attrition and is 10 times more important than compensation in predicting turnover.” Kindle location 8

“We have seen no statistically significant increase in the average levels of employee engagement in the last twenty years. As of this writing in 2023, in the US, the average level of employee engagement is still hovering slightly below one out of three (32 percent). Why haven’t we been able to improve employee engagement to any significant degree in the last twenty years despite knowing exactly what drives employee engagement and applying massive amounts of resources toward increasing employee engagement? In 2021, while researching employee engagement survey practices, I stumbled upon the answer to the question above.” Kindle location 12

“Employee engagement is perceived, incorrectly, as an ‘HR thing’ that can be improved with perks and benefits. However, according to research from Gallup, at least 70 percent of employee engagement and retention is driven by direct managers. Unfortunately, even when leadership training is offered, research suggests that as much as 85–90 percent of it fails to create any lasting improvements. Leadership training needs to effectively build new habits that stick, and that are proven to improve engagement and retention and drive sustainable high performance.” Kindle location 13

“The simple, four-step process that I discovered (and is supported by decades of research on employee engagement) can be applied by any leader to consistently drive high levels of engagement and performance on her team. You’ll learn this four-step process in this book.” Kindle location 15

“To inspire greatness in their teams, leaders must serve as coaches who are obsessed with helping others to thrive: to be happy, great human beings, who do great work. Great leaders want team members to be happy, great human beings who do great work not to benefit the leader, but because that’s what’s best for the team members. When people consistently do great work and positively impact others along the way, they feel good about themselves and truly enjoy their work. This results in greater happiness and satisfaction in life. Great leaders tend to think in terms of How can I give my team members what they need to thrive?” Kindle location 25-26

“The rest of this book is devoted to three steps of a simple process—supported by decades of research—to consistently inspire greatness in others and help leaders at all levels dramatically improve their abilities to sustain high levels of employee engagement and performance. The three steps in the process flow naturally and logically from the key first principle that the primary job of a leader is to inspire greatness in one’s team.” Kindle location 37

“There are three principal reasons large surveys fail: 1. Too Much Information; Focused on the Wrong Variables; Questions That Don’t Lead to Action” Kindle location 40-41

“To see improvements in employee engagement and retention quickly and sustainably, I strongly recommend that you start by creating a strong foundation of regular feedback that creates a virtuous cycle, in which employees regularly give feedback, feel heard, and see action being taken on their feedback within a few days.” Kindle location 42

“Feeling appreciated is such an important need that people would do their jobs voluntarily if they felt appreciated enough. I’ve heard leaders push back against the idea of sharing appreciation with employees for doing their jobs. They say things like, ‘I’m paying them. Isn’t that appreciation?’ No. It’s not. Being paid for work is required by law unless a person specifically requests to be a volunteer.” Kindle location 84-85

“Effectively appreciating employees has numerous other business benefits as well, including increases in employee engagement that result in profound effects. According to Gallup, globally, only one out of every four employees strongly agrees that they have been recognized or appreciated for their contributions in the last seven days. And, by increasing that ratio to six out of ten, organizations could realize a 28 percent improvement in quality, a 31 percent reduction in absenteeism, and a 12 percent reduction in shrinkage.” Kindle location 88

“The habit of seeing and appreciating what’s right can help us help our team members to thrive and drives high levels of engagement and sustainable high performance. And, as we get better at seeing what’s right in our lives, and expressing gratitude for it, our lives improve in a number of areas.” Kindle location 89

“Clarity around expectations may be the most foundational need for people to thrive and be engaged at work. Research from Gallup has found that only half of employees strongly agree that they know what is expected of them. This, of course, is highly problematic. A lack of clarity around expectations creates mediocrity, anxiety, and frustration for both managers and team members. According to Gallup, by increasing the percentage of employees who strongly agree that they know what is expected of them from 50 to 80 percent, teams and organizations could realize a 22 percent reduction in turnover, a 29 percent reduction in safety incidents, and a 10 percent increase in productivity (sales).” Kindle location 95

“Although it’s essential to create clarity around job descriptions, managers often assign short-term tasks and projects as well. It’s very important to be clear here. I recommend two behaviors, which are relatively easy to turn into habits. First, I recommend taking the time to share how a task fits into the strategic plan for the team or organization. Second, I recommend getting unambiguous confirmation that a team member understands a task or project, and how it fits into the bigger picture, before any work begins. Simply ask, ‘Just to make sure that I communicated clearly, would you please describe to me your understanding of what we discussed?’ It is only when you hear the other person talking in their own words that you can verify that you are both aligned in your understanding.” Kindle location 99-100

“Two Simple Habits for Improving Well-Being and Performance: The first habit for helping to improve the well-being of team members is to have regular coaching meetings to help people be more efficient. The second habit is to do the best you can to eliminate the expectation that employees should be responding to non-urgent work-related communication when they’re away from their desks. This is particularly important for team members who are virtual because the boundaries between work time and personal time have almost vanished for them.” Kindle location 112-114

“These two simple habits can help your team or organization dramatically improve performance by helping to shift the focus from measuring activity to measuring results while simultaneously helping you to improve the mental and physical health of your employees.” Kindle location 119

“Being ‘in the zone’ is one of the most enjoyable experiences people can have. In the 1970s, researchers in positive psychology became interested in this state, which they began calling ‘flow state.’ Flow state is associated with increased happiness, higher intrinsic motivation, greater creativity, and better emotional regulation. It’s also associated with incredible levels of productivity.” Kindle location 127

“According to research from the Gallup organization, only one in three employees strongly agree that they have opportunity to do what they do best every day. Gallup also found that engaged employees spend their time with a 4:1 ratio of time doing what they do best versus time doing things that they don’t do well. For actively disengaged employees, that ratio was 1:1. This means that we need to do more than just create a balance between performing tasks that are strengths and those that are weaknesses. We need to help team members spend as much time as possible doing what they’re best at. The first step to helping team members spend more time doing what they’re best at is to identify their strengths.” Kindle location 127-130

“By helping team members spend as much time as possible doing what they do best, you’ll see dramatic increases in engagement and productivity while also helping your team members enjoy their work more. This will also help you to retain your best employees and attract top talent. And you might just help a team member create a dream job that helps both the team member and your organization to grow.” Kindle location 135

“Most leaders are aware of the benefits of having diverse teams. Diverse teams have been shown to be more creative and more likely to innovate. They are also more likely to help organizations capture new markets. One critical element of having diverse teams is to intentionally seek out diverse candidates in the hiring process so the organization is more likely to find a new hire who is not only the best fit for the job, but also somehow diverse from the average employee.” Kindle location 142

“The first step toward meeting the need people have for receiving regular, helpful feedback is to work on building the habit of approaching feedback conversations with the coaching mindset and on having them more frequently. Ideally, a team member shouldn’t go more than a week without receiving some type of feedback, whether positive or on areas for growth. In the absence of feedback, team members will assume they’re doing well, and poor performance will not likely correct itself. The feedback should be offered as soon as possible after the event that triggered the feedback. These can be quick, five-minute conversations. Most of your feedback should be reinforcing behaviors you’d like to see more of. If you’ve been keeping up with your daily reminder to appreciate people for doing things right, you’re already halfway there.” Kindle location 144

“Just as important as providing feedback frequently is providing feedback that is actually helpful. Apparently, most managers are regularly failing to do this. Gallup research has also found that only 26 percent of employees say that the feedback they receive is helpful. The primary reason employees cite for this is that feedback tends to be a one-way conversation, and it feels like criticism or judgment.” Kindle location 145

“First, the mindset is important. I recommend approaching feedback with the mindset of wanting to help the team member grow and to excel at what they do because that’s what’s best for them. Second, feedback needs to be specific and objective. Instead of saying things like ‘You handled that call poorly,’ which is an opinion that could trigger a feeling of defensiveness, I recommend saying, ‘On the call, you said _____,’ which is a specific,

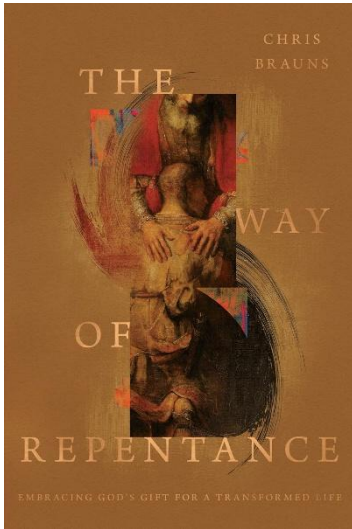
objective statement. Third, to be most helpful, I recommend explaining why the improvement is important and how it will help the team member to see better results and hit a specific team goal or meet a specific expectation. Finally, I recommend asking how you could help the team member implement the change. Kindle location 145-147

“Every leader almost certainly likes the idea of empowering a team or organization to the point where the team or organization functions just as well when the leader is absent as when she is present. This is especially true for leaders of publicly traded companies, who are under tremendous pressure to hit profit targets every single quarter. There is an abundance of evidence linking higher levels of autonomy to increased well-being, satisfaction, and engagement. In fact, a solid case can be made that for most modern jobs, autonomy is a better motivator than money.” Kindle location 157

“There are three main areas of work that offer possibilities for giving employees increased levels of autonomy: where they do their work, when they do their work, and how they do their work. I recommend starting this journey with a simple habit for giving employees more autonomy regarding how they do their work.” Kindle location 158-159

“Trusting the people around us is one of the most fundamental universal needs for being able to thrive, especially at work. When there is a lack of trust in leaders, or one’s team members, it’s just a matter of time before the team or organization will fail. When people don’t trust each other, they spend way too much of their precious mental and physical energy engaged in protecting themselves from the potential threats, not just outside their teams, but within them.” Kindle location 178

***** Spiritual Formation *****



[The Way of Repentance: Embracing God's Gift for a Transformed Life](#)

By: Chris Brauns

Crossway, 2026

246 pages

[Find it on Amazon*](#)

*As an Amazon Associate Missio Nexus earns from qualifying purchases.

Summary

In this book Chris Brauns (senior pastor at the Red Brick Church in Stillman Valley, Illinois) explains that deep, abiding gladness comes when we grieve sin and turn toward Jesus. This thorough study of repentance examines the Old and New Testaments as well as the Westminster Shorter Catechism. It is made practical with reflection questions, prayers, and advice for daily sanctification. As readers apply biblical principles, they will experience life-giving joy in their spiritual lives and restoration in their relationships.

Best Illustration

“But there is more to be said about the gift of repentance. First, repentance is not a gift that is opened only one time. Rather, repentance is part of the ongoing life of believers. Second, just as gifts are often received at a particular place, like a Christmas tree, likewise the gift of repentance is received through our participation in the ordinary means of grace, which includes the word, sharing life together with other believers, worship, and prayer.” Kindle location 1370

Best Idea

“If we think about what repentance involves, a complete turnaround of one’s heart, mind, and will, we see that repentance can only come about as a gift from God. After all, we cannot wake ourselves from the dead nor perform heart surgery on ourselves nor give ourselves sight when we are blind. The only hope is for God to give us the gift of repentance.” Kindle location 1004

Best Take Away

“Our daily struggles with idolatry bring us to the central point of this chapter. Christians should repent in an ongoing way—that is, repentance and faith are not only the way into the Christian life but also the way of the Christian life.” Kindle location 1404

Our Recommendation

This book will help the reader more fully understand what true repentance is and how to experience it. Repentance as a major New Testament theme is helpfully examined and explained in the book.

Best Quotes

“It will help us engage with the questions if we begin with a very basic definition. Repentance means turning from unbelief to belief in Jesus. Repentance references a spiritual ‘about face.’” Kindle location 225

“This, then, is biblical repentance: an about-face of mind, heart, and will from sin to Jesus that results in bearing fruit.” Kindle location 230

“Here is how the Westminster Shorter Catechism defines repentance: ‘Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, does, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.’” Kindle location 348

“But make no mistake about this: However broken a family or an individual might be, for however long of a period, the account of Judah’s repentance and the message of the Bible offer tremendous hope. By God’s grace, it is possible to turn from ugliness to our gracious God.” Kindle location 593

“Like faith, which is also a gospel grace, repentance is fundamentally not a work we accomplish; rather, it is a gift that God gives. To be sure, we do repent. We do believe. But at bottom, repentance and faith are gifts.” Kindle location 948

“Paul recognized that if those who oppose godly pastors are to turn about and stop causing problems, this is a gift that God gives. After all, people who have lost their senses—that is, who are so sideways that they are not thinking clearly—indeed, those who have been ensnared by Satan, cannot turn themselves around. They need God to grant them repentance as a gift.” Kindle location 957

“Rather than trying to comprehensively understand the purposes of God, we must firmly hold onto the truth that while repentance requires our response, it is fundamentally a gift that God gives. If we fail to understand this truth and its implications, we will try to go forward in our own strength and end up exhausted or being manipulative where others are concerned.” Kindle location 1033

“Before the mind of the sinner inclines to repentance, it must be aroused by thinking upon divine judgment. When this thought is deeply and thoroughly fixed in mind—that God will someday mount his judgment seat to demand a reckoning of all words and deeds—it will not permit the miserable man to rest nor to breathe freely even for a moment without stirring him continually to reflect upon another mode of life whereby he may be able to stand firm in that judgment.” Kindle location 1239

“Chad Van Dixhoorn explains that repenting of particular sins requires three steps. First, we must realize that we commit individual sins. Second, we should name those sins. Third, we should turn away from those specific sins.” Kindle location 1495

“The fact is, we do not hate our sins enough. This is why we repeatedly struggle with the same patterns. We might think that other people’s sins stink, but we do not think our own sins smell that bad.” Kindle location 1526

“Likewise, the ordinary means of grace reminds us that participating in the word, the sacraments, fellowship, and prayer should be an ordinary part of the rhythm of life, that these are means or conduits through which God works, and that we are not earning or working for our salvation when we make use of these ordinary means.” Kindle location 1688

“This chapter considers how to distinguish true repentance from the counterfeit sort, proceeding in four parts: 1. First, we must learn to distinguish between worldly sorrow and godly grief, and that doing so is legitimate. 2. Second, we must understand that evaluating repentance is difficult. Indeed, for reasons the Bible repeatedly emphasizes, it is one of the hardest things we do. 3. Third, we must realize that there is a point where repentance is particularly difficult to evaluate. We must know where this is and must guard against a misdiagnosis. 4. Fourth, we identify from 2 Corinthians 7 the foundational principle for evaluating repentance.” Kindle location 1900

“The bottom line is that none of us, especially in the short run, can tell for sure if someone is repentant. This is particularly true when someone is caught in their sin rather than confessing of their own volition.” Kindle location 1952

“To be blunt, just because we feel very sorry or we have regretted our actions for years and have shed buckets of tears does not mean that we are truly repentant. It may only mean that we feel sorry for ourselves or the people we hurt.” Kindle location 1986

“Again, I would emphasize, don’t be too impressed by the tears of people who say they are sorry. Many times, such tears are born out of self-pity.” Kindle location 2328

“If your repentance is long, it will be wrong—that is, if you take too many spoken words or pages and pages of text to confess, you are more likely to deepen the wound rather than help heal it. Be concise.” Kindle location 2384

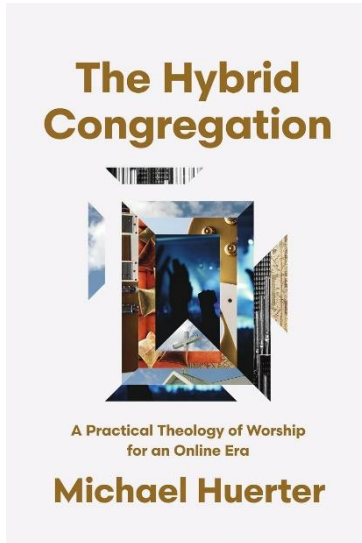
“Be prepared for the offended party not to respond graciously nor to take ownership for his or her areas of sin. Live at peace so far as it depends on you. Where wounds are deep, it often takes a long time for people to respond in the right way. Sometimes they never do.” Kindle location 2514

“If you are considering whether to hear the repentance of someone who has offended you, start with this prayer: ‘Lord, because you loved me while I was a sinner and undeserving, I know I must follow your example in loving [name of the offender].’” Kindle location 2715

“The bottom line is that, too many times, we spend far too much of our time mentally rehearsing the pain we have experienced rather than thinking about Jesus. The more we prayerfully meditate on Christ, the more we will be defined by his love.” Kindle location 2728

“To say it more precisely, to repent is to go home to a place we’ve never been before. The Bible teaches us that the home we all long for is to be with Jesus on the new earth (Rev. 21-22).” Kindle location 2882

***** Missions/Ministry *****



[The Hybrid Congregation: A Practical Theology of Worship for an Online Era](#)

By: Michael Huerter

IVP Academic, 2025

187 pages

[Find it on Amazon*](#)

*As an Amazon Associate Missio Nexus earns from qualifying purchases.

Summary

The book focuses on the intersection of church music and online communication, by asking the central question: “what does the church need to understand about digitally mediated interactions... in order for individual communities and ministers to make well-informed, effective, and contextually appropriate decisions in their ministry?” (page 2). The book reframes the common misunderstandings on participation (activity and passivity), embodiment (embodied and disembodied), mediation (mediated and unmediated), and virtuality (real and virtual). Using insights from various disciplines (digital ethnography; musicology; theology; and technology studies), the author proposes a practical theology of hybrid worship through the intermingling of online and offline realities in a “world that has increasingly internalized the internet and digital technologies” (page 19).

Best Illustration

“Online communities outside the church highlight how networks of connection can function to build community.... (One example) grows out of a singer-songwriter’s Patreon page, on which fans can support the artist’s work and gain access to patron-only updates, messages, and vlogs.” Page 124

Best Idea

“Christian scholars and practitioners can take a posture of curiosity, exploring what may be possible in this new technological era while also being aware of the malforming narratives and economies that may pull these technologies toward goals other than the flourishing of creation and worship of the Creator.” Page 107

Best Take Away

“Effective online communal practices are participatory, transformative, appropriate to the medium, and centered on God.” Page 121 v

Our Recommendation

We recommend this book to lead pastors, worship pastors, online pastors, next-generation ministry leaders, and digital ministry staff. In addition, the author cites that the “book has the potential to be beneficial to scholars in

the intersection of disciplines, implicated in church music studies, and to church leaders and ministry practitioners” (page 12).

Best Quotes

“We need to think more carefully and critically about the interactions of online worship and spiritual formation because this combination is a relatively new development.” Page 4

“If we are to minister in a world woven through digital thread and relationships, we cannot afford either to embrace every aspect of digital life unquestioningly (this would neglect the counter-cultural call of discipleship) or to reject and dismiss opportunities these technologies offer (forgetting the presence and power of God to bring forth goodness and life in every situation).” Page 6

“Engaging with the history of the internet as a technological revolution highlights the parallels between various significant transitions in church music across time.” Page 7

“Virtual fieldwork employs technologically communicated realities in the gathering of information for ethnographic research.” (Nasir Syed) Page 8

“The field of digital religious studies... (is) engaging how not only people practice religion in digital spaces and mediated online spaces but also how those practices and the trends within digital culture impact church more broadly.” (Heidi A. Campbell) Page 9

“Every time a new communication technology appears and begins to affect society, there is a dual response of excitement and anxiety.” Page 13

“Media ecology (is) the study of how dominant forms of communication in a media environment affect the ways people relate to the world.” (Tom Wagner) Page 14

“Each new communication medium goes through a period of flux, after which it stabilizes into a simultaneously more predictable and more forgettable feature of the surrounding society.” Page 27

“The development of the internet and the attention economy constitute a new sort of exploitation, in which human beings are not only exploited in the use of their labor for extraction of natural resources; rather, their lives are themselves the resource, and they are exploited in its extraction.... The emerging extractive economy threatens our ability to use our mental faculty of attention in a way that is conducive to human thriving.” (Justin E. H. Smith) Page 30

“Human beings long for home. Humanity’s desire for genuine connection with the world, other people, and, within a Christian framework, God, is fundamental. But when a home changes to become something unfamiliar, that sense of rootedness leading to a flourishing life can be disrupted.... The challenge that faces us today is how we are to continue attending to the presence of God, other people, and ourselves in a world that is changing.” Page 34

“The church is called to resist the demands of the attention economy, while making effective and faithful use of the tools at our disposal.” Page 44

“How might music in the church continue to play formative, interactive and interpassive, participatory and presentational, roles in the life of communities of faith as technologies and cultures change?” Page 59

“Learning to play an instrument is not less embodied because it involves technology; rather, the process of attaining greater mastery over that technology represents an increased experience of embodiment.” Page 65

“To be online is to be as embodied, as open to God, as human, as vulnerable, as real, as it is to be onsite.” (Peter Phillips) Page 73

“Music, then, functions in evangelical worship as mediated access to an aspirationally unmediated experience of the divine.” Page 78

“The mediation of Jesus the Son experienced through the immediacy of the Holy Spirit and the community of faith is our experience of God’s reality.” Page 92

“Scholars generally recognize that as the internet and digital media increasingly are used to build, maintain, and support community relationships in contemporary culture, the online and offline expressions of the community are increasingly connected and overlapping rather than distinctly different.” Page 94

“Virtual reality has the potential to shape real value.” Page 98

“A productive way forward will move through openness to new realities into a counter-cultural vision and witness that dignifies human lives and forms our communities toward great virtue.” Page 107

“Most Americans live hybrid lives because our online and offline lives have become integrated. Interactions online shape offline experiences, and offline communication and practices shape people’s online engagement.” (Angela Gorrell) Page 110

“The offline and online aspects of our lives, and more particularly our experiences of faith and community, are connected as an embedded online–offline reality that calls a new hybrid space into being... an ‘onlife.’” Page 113

“One way we can continue this learning process is by attending to and being curious about expressions of online community outside the church.” Page 124

“What forms of technology and expressions of liturgy can be successfully combined, given the resources we have?” Page 144

“Value connection over content.” Page 145

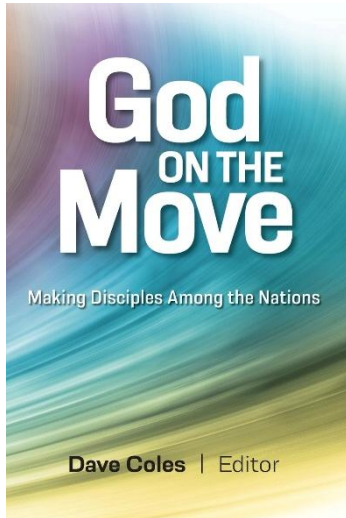
“But the church may also have an opportunity to demonstrate respect and openness toward younger generations. Digital natives have much to offer the church, far beyond their technological experiences and aptitude, but those gifts around technology are valuable as well.” Page 147

“A hybrid approach to ministry and church music will acknowledge that both online and offline faith expressions must be integrated.” Page 153

“Church music practitioners have encountered huge shifts, new questions, and unexpected obstacles to doing the work of music ministry with their congregations. There are also fresh opportunities and promising potentials in the new expressions of community and music making that are emerging.” Page 155

[Listen to the interview here..](#)

***** Church Mission Leadership*****



[God on the Move: Making Disciples Among the Nations](#)

By: Dave Coles, ed

William Carey Publishing

201 pages

[Find it on Amazon*](#)

*As an Amazon Associate Missio Nexus earns from qualifying purchases.

Summary

God on the Move, edited by Dave Coles, is a condensed adaptation of the book *Motus Dei* by Warrick Farah intended to present the heart of *Motus Dei* to a broader, less academic audience. *God on the Move* describes the methods and impacts of discipleship making movements which center around bringing the gospel to unreached areas by first identifying a person of peace to facilitate sharing the gospel with others in their culture and then studying the Bible through interactive methods with an emphasis on obedience and making more disciples. These methods have resulted in fast growth leading to larger church planting movements (CPMs) which are defined as “a group with at least one hundred congregations, planted by four successive generations of believers.” (page 18) The principles presented in *God on the Move* differ from traditional church planting efforts and have not been without controversy. The book concludes with a discussion of the most common objections to these newer methods of evangelism and church planting.

Best Illustration

The growth of Christianity in several locations around the world via the methods described in *God on the Move* is discussed, including efforts in Thailand. Thai believers have set a goal “to plant a house church in every village in the four provinces...” (page 82). The process begins with finding a person of peace in a village who is open to hearing the gospel and willing to introduce the evangelistic team to others in the village. After getting permission from the village leader, they hold an outdoor meeting. “The team shares their testimonies with enthusiasm and confidence, as well as a simple Bible lesson. The team communicates a simple and clear gospel message with stories illustrated with poster pictures... The last speaker asks if anyone would like to pray to Jesus for needs in their life. Almost every hand goes up.” (page 84) The passage goes on to describe additional details of the evangelistic meetings and efforts which have resulted in much growth. “Since 2017, 89,009 Thais have become Christians.” (page 80)

Best Idea

“CPMs [church planting movements] multiply quickly but not because they focus on speed. They focus on immediacy: immediately obeying the Lord’s word, like Jesus’s first disciples did when he called them.” Page 161

Best Take Away

A focus of these discipleship making movements is an interactive, discussion-focused approach to Bible study. “DBS [discovery Bible study] and group prayer are interactive. They focus on inductive learning and active participation.” Page 112

“...leaders answer questions with more questions. This strategy encourages everyone to retell Scripture in their own words. Focusing on the text and shared discovery leads to a powerful disciple-making revolution.” Page 57

Our Recommendation

God on the Move is best for those interested in finding out about newer methods of evangelism and church planting through a shorter, less academic synopsis.

Best Quotes

“When people focus on Jesus’s teachings, God often starts great movements.” Page 26

“...created the term DMMs [disciple making movements] to describe the spread of the gospel by making disciples who learn to follow God’s word and quickly make other disciples who do the same.” Page 27

“Every DMM we have seen starts with intense prayer and fasting. Faith-filled prayers ask God to bring his kingdom into people’s lives and entire villages and cities.” Page 27

“They [discipleship making movements] do not depend on resources from outside but can be sustained through what local people can afford and create.” Page 28

“DMMs [discipleship making movements] follow the principle of entering communities with genuine love shown through compassionate ministry. ...Compassionate ministry is not an end in itself but is connected to our desire to see people come to know God. Compassion also helps us gain acceptance in the community and makes people willing to hear our message.” Page 28

“The Bible calls this person a ‘person of peace.’ These people are usually open to the gospel, welcoming, and willing to introduce their families to the gospel. The person of peace, whether a man or a woman, breaks the cultural barrier. As a cultural insider, they do the inside work of promoting the gospel in their family, community, and tribe from day one.” Page 29

“A DBS [discovery Bible study] usually happens in a group and has four parts: 1) the group hears or reads a Bible passage or story in their own language; 2) Each person in the group retells the message in their own words; 3) Each person shares an ‘I will’ statement, describing what they feel they should do in response to the passage and making a promise to obey it; 4) Each person lists the people they plan to share the passage with.” Page 30

“...we have learned that advancing God’s kingdom can only happen by taking Jesus’s teachings in the Gospels seriously and committing to obey him, no matter the cost.” Page 39

“...we give credit to God for all the growth... Our part is to keep a teachable and obedient heart that responds to the Spirit’s prompting as we work to glorify God’s name among all people.” Page 40

“So why risk something that was working? He realized that traditional methods for multiplying churches take too long, cost too much, and lead to little cultural change.” Page 43

“Many ‘converts’ never obey Jesus by making new disciples. They are like seedless grapes-the fruit is there, but it can’t grow into a new vine.” Page 44

“As a result, local believers are encouraged to ask, ‘What must we change in our lives and culture to obey all the commands of Christ?’” Page 47

“The biggest challenge has been overcoming centuries of an individual-focused, information-heavy Western approach to discipleship.” Page 47

“However, movements focused on growth aim to reach entire families, tribes, and communities-and sometimes individuals.” Page 49

“Evaluating the DNA of disciples in later generations, we found that talking about God is the most essential part of their daily lives. They talk about God with great confidence.” Page 53

“Ordinary disciples show Jesus’s way through their love. This happens especially when they break negative patterns, like domestic abuse or tribal conflicts. Changes like these make people curious to know why.” Page 55

“However, the greatest miracle is the empowerment of ordinary disciples. Rejecting the tradition that only clergy can teach, all disciples are challenged to launch a DBS [discovery Bible study].” Page 56

“The true game-changes are not just those who believe in Jesus but those who obey him.” Page 57

“When disciples hear from God and live it out, they set an example for others to follow. As the saying goes, ‘Most truth is caught, not taught.’” Page 57

“What happens when the standard for Christian life becomes just going to church once a week instead of actively following Jesus every day?” Page 61

“They create relationships with their family, friends, and community, through which the gospel is shared and shown.” Page 67

“If I find one person who is open, I want to help them see their workplace or school as a place to reach others. So that person of peace starts reaching out to their contacts.” Page 69

“Our teaching doesn’t force information on them; it involves discussion and discovery together. We use a group learning process, so we, as trainers, also learn. Everyone shares their experiences and what they have learned, and new ideas come as the Lord directs. We teach a little, then they do it and learn from their experience as well as from our teaching.” Page 70

“When they start using what they learned, they learn even more things because God is teaching them. What they learn from God, they learn much better.” Page 70

“The Bhojpuri movement has taken a different approach by focusing on empowering others instead of holding onto power. The movement avoids special religious titles. It empowers all believers to become leaders in their context, using their unique gifts.” Page 74

“Multiplication happens naturally when everyone takes ownership, feels empowered, and obeys God’s

commands.” Page 75

“Gender issues are a huge problem in North Indian society. Men and women treat each other differently after accepting Christ then they did before. They now show love and care that goes against all previous customs and traditions.” Page 75

“From the very beginning, we have believed that men and women are equal. Just as God calls men, He calls women too. If men can make disciples, women can make disciples.” Page 75

“We believe that leadership should not depend on education or status. Our movement includes some leaders who are not literate at all.” Page 77

“Each lesson is reviewed and taught again in their community meetings, and new believers are encouraged to practice teaching the lesson to others as well.” Page 89

“This movement is flourishing, not only because many Thai people are becoming Christians but also because many of these new believers are sharing their faith with their family and friends. As a result, small house churches are being planted in thousands of villages for the first time.” Page 92

“However, the issue seems to be that people should be able to worship God in their own culture and not be forced into foreign expressions of the faith. Local responses to the gospel will create different cultural expressions of the church... In other words, the diverse nature of the church is not a threat to biblical faith.” Page 100

“The main driver of the CPM [church planting movement] process tends to be easy-to-copy churches with group interactive Bible study as their main practice.” Page 102

“Are there unbiblical teachings and traditions that need to be unlearned because they’re stopping movements?” page 102

“The flexible house church, or ‘microchurch’ model, seems essential for developing a movement church structure.” Page 105

“The irreducible minimum church structure requires that a group of believers in Jesus starts to call themselves ‘a church.’ They also try to learn and obey Scripture, practice baptism and communion, have recognized spiritual leaders and see their spiritual unity with other Jesus followers.” Page 107

“For example, social networks often play a bigger role than doctrine in bringing individuals into a faith community. Networks also act as the main way for spreading faith to a wider world. Research has found the gospel’s spread through natural social networks linked with planting more churches.” Page 109

“For example, most documented movements today are found in rural, developing areas in the Global South. They consist of simple churches. Most happen in societies where extended families are largely intact.” Page 111

“Are movements limited in the individualistic West by the breakdown of household structures?” Page 111

“Obedience-based discipleship started as a counter to the rational focus on mere knowledge found in much

Western discipleship. In this model, obeying biblical commands like evangelism and godly behavior is preferred over merely cognitive ‘discipleship’ focused on passing on information.” Page 113

“Church planting movements (CPMs) and related strategies have been closely studied, and people have reached very different conclusions about them. Some praise these movements, while others” criticize them harshly.” Page 123

“Fast growth does not imply a weak gospel message or a shallow faith in the new believers.” Page 128

“Church planting movements depend entirely on God. The Holy Spirit gives power to the message and the messengers, as God brings people into the church.” Page 131

“However, the core message of the gospel never changed. Gospel messengers should never remove the offense of the cross but rather seek to make clear the meaning of the cross.” Page 133

“While ordinary believers are essential to CPMs [church planting movements], the Bible also shows the importance of equipping strong local leaders.” Page 135

“We should invest our efforts in approaches that seem most likely to bear fruit. Not all methods are equally effective, and no one method will work well everywhere... At the same time, we know that humans cannot produce movements just by using a particular method. God must give the growth.” Page 137

“We do a disservice if we promise (or make people think) that if anyone just does the right activities, a quick growing movement will happen.” Page 157

“Simple, low-cost methods can multiply much faster than methods that need a lot of resources.” Page 160

“When the apostles did the teaching and preaching recorded in Acts, most people still couldn’t read.” Page 164

“Interpretation by mature teachers is valuable. However, we should not make mature teachers a barrier, hindering the delivery of God’s word to those who need to hear it.” Page 165

“The leaders of movements value biblical education, but they don’t wait for disciples to finish a degree before preparing them to entrust God’s truth to reliable people.” Page 169

“The leaders of movements build strong biblical faith through interactive study and application of God’s word. Every disciple is trained to work with Scripture and apply it for themselves. They are also trained to ask each other, ‘Where do you see that in the Bible?’ This is one of the best ways to prevent heresy.” Page 171

“Many of the churches planted by Paul would not meet what many today might consider a minimal standard for being an established church.” Page 172

“However, deeper engagement with Scripture usually happens in an interactive way, as in a DBS [discovery Bible study]. Everyone gets actively involved in thinking, discussing, and applying the truths of Scripture. They likely don’t have a pulpit. And they don’t think one person has all the right answers. They focus on applying God’s word, often with clear accountability to each other for obeying what they have learned.” Page 174

“People from non-Christian backgrounds don’t always come to faith as isolated individuals, standing against

everyone else they know. People often come to faith with family members or important others who connect with their faith journey.” Page 178

“If ‘obedience-based discipleship’ meant trying to earn salvation through obedience, that would be bad. However, the phrase is meant to simply reflect one basic part of Jesus’s command to ‘make disciples.’ He said, ‘teach them to obey everything I have commanded you’ (Matt 28: 19-20).” Page 178

“CPMs [church planting movements] often build a foundation for faith through a chronological study of ‘creation to Christ’ passages.” Page 179

“This objection assumes a human intermediary is needed for accurate communication of God’s message. This seems based on the wrong idea that God’s word and God’s Spirit are not enough to present God’s truth.” Page 185

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