

The GlobalChurch Project

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Samuel Chetti

Local Church Small Group Resource

This resource is designed to help your small group discussion. It's shaped to inspire you to consider new ways for understanding the mission of the church. Questions are organized in themes. Consider choosing the themes appropriate to your small group context. You don't need to cover all the questions. Allow for a time of response.

Small Group Preparation:

- Video: Samuel Chetti, 60 minutes.
- Scripture: Acts 10, and Revelation 7:9–17.
- Participants are encouraged to bring their own journals or writing materials.

Themes explored in the video:

- **Strategic Denominational & Local Church Leadership**
- **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership**
- **The New Humanity in Jesus Christ**
- **Managing Resources and Assets**
- **Organizational Governance**
- **Being a People in Diaspora**
- **Living as “the will of God”**

Beginning the conversation

Consider the questions suggested below to start the conversation for your small group. They'll consolidate the content of the video, after you've viewed it.

1. What were the major themes in Samuel's responses?
2. How does Samuel Chetti describe effective, shepherding leadership?
3. Discuss the difficulties of the content. What was difficult to understand? Was there anything you would like to clarify with the group?

4. Theological method: How is Samuel's theology informed and shaped by his practical ministry? What approaches does he take in understanding God in the context of his day-to-day experiences and discipling?

Going deeper

Explore the major themes raised in the video. Critically engage with Samuel's theology. Consider the questions that respond to the issues raised in your preliminary discussion.

1. **Strategic Denominational Leadership** (leading a diverse group of people & churches): Why is Samuel's goal to find ways to move diverse groups of people, from within the context of their own special identity (e.g. ethnicity)? Why does he want them to both embrace their unique identities, and embrace the idea of the "household of God" and the "new humanity in Jesus Christ"?
2. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership**: What is "effective excellence ministry resource management"? How does it shape what Samuel Chetti does as a leader?
3. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership**: Why doesn't an emphasis on church growth, or an emphasis on Bible knowledge, necessarily lead to discipleship? Why don't these things alone necessarily help with church conflict, deep discipleship, and integrity in ministry?
4. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership**: What does it mean to add a focus on "personal ministry effectiveness" to biblical and theological knowledge in ministry, and to other types of ministry competency?
5. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership**: According to Samuel, what are the key things in the Stephen Covey material that lay the foundation for effective ministry?
6. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership**: Why is it important for leadership to cultivate (1) personal effectiveness management, (2) leadership excellence, (3) passionate discipleship, and (4) engagement in the mission of Jesus?
7. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership**: How does Samuel describe "shepherding excellence"? What is it? Why is it important?
8. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership**: What does it mean to develop character and integrity and faithfulness in ministry? Why are these things foundational to effective, excellent, shepherding leadership?
9. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership**: How is "strategic intent" different from "strategic planning"? How does "strategic intent" create an atmosphere for strategic conversations, and for discerning the will of God in community?
10. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership**: What is an "inflection point"? Why does it require "moral, intellectual, and psychological courage"? Why does "strategic intent" require a high level of discernment, data gathering, honest conversations, honesty about one's prejudices and fears and anxieties and paranoia, and a willingness to embrace change?
11. **The New Humanity in Jesus Christ**: Discuss what it means to lead from the "Omega Point"? (In other words, leading toward health and mission, from within the context of a vision of the end of time, and a vision of the new heaven and new earth and new humanity that Christ is ushering in).
12. **The New Humanity in Jesus Christ**: What is a caucus? Why doesn't it lead to a truly multiethnic "new humanity in Christ"?
13. **The New Humanity in Jesus Christ**: Discuss the 3 great metaphors Samuel uses. What do they mean for the church and its mission. (1) The imagery of the Tower of Babel. (2) The imagery of Pentecost. (3) The imagery of the Household of God, and the New Humanity of Jesus Christ.
14. **The New Humanity in Jesus Christ**: Why doesn't Samuel have "multicultural" or "urban ministry" departments? Do you agree with him on this?

15. **The New Humanity in Jesus Christ:** What challenges did Samuel face, as the first Indian Asian CEO within his denomination? Why did people's relationship to him change, the moment he came close to "capital and power"?
16. **The New Humanity in Jesus Christ:** How do our addictions to power and wealth affect the way we relate to other ethnicities (and especially those that are not a part of the dominant culture)?
17. **The New Humanity in Jesus Christ:** How has the experience of discrimination and struggle shaped the way Samuel has grown and performed as a Christian CEO of an American denomination?
18. **Managing Resources and Assets:** What does it mean to free up and use resources for the sake of ministry and mission?
19. **Managing Resources and Assets:** What does this saying mean, and do you agree with it? "Without vision, people scatter. Without funding, vision scatters."
20. **Managing Resources and Assets:** We often see things as assets, and people as liabilities. Why is this wrong thinking, that doesn't reflect the vision of the kingdom of God?
21. **Organizational Governance:** Samuel's organization follows a modified version of the Carver model of board governance. Discuss the features of this model. Discuss the role of the CEO and the board members in this model.
22. **Organizational Governance:** What are the main benefits of this type of governance structure for Samuel's organization? How does the model (1) remove micro-management, (2) free the CEO to develop the organization and the staff, (3) give the CEO options, (4) set boundaries for the CEO, (5) hold the CEO close to the board, and (6) allow creativity to flow without fear?
23. **Strategic Denominational & Local Church Leadership** (leading a diverse group of people & churches): What does Samuel name as the biggest challenges facing denominational leadership today?
24. **Strategic Denominational & Local Church Leadership** (leading a diverse group of people & churches): How should denominational leaders (and local church pastors) balance the "autonomy of the local church" with "interdependency and accountability to the wider group of churches"?
25. **Strategic Denominational & Local Church Leadership** (leading a diverse group of people & churches): How can local church pastors and denominational leaders create space for "those who think differently"? How do we encourage and listen to those who challenge the status quo? And those who offer alternative opinions? And those who may, in fact, offer a prophetic and timely voice?
26. **Strategic Denominational & Local Church Leadership** (leading a diverse group of people & churches): What does it mean to lead out of influence and trust, rather than out of title and position?
27. **Strategic Denominational & Local Church Leadership** (leading a diverse group of people & churches): According to Samuel, why is it important that denominational leaders and local church leaders share a common language, theology, and vision for the churches? How do we create "unity in diversity", as we seek to align denominational and local church worldviews? What does it mean for an association of churches to have a "common language", a "common mission", and commitment to the "common Person" (Jesus Christ)?
28. **Being a People in Diaspora:** What does the word "diaspora" mean? Discuss the idea that "we're all diasporic Christians and churches; some of us are immediate immigrants from other nations, but all of us are in diaspora."
29. **Being a People in Diaspora:** Why are "the people of the kingdom of God always in a diasporic state in any given culture"? How does this shape the way we relate to our culture? To other ethnicities? To immigrants? To mission? To church? To power and wealth? To the way we practice discipleship? To the way we raise our children? To our commitment to unity within multi-ethnicity?
30. **Living as "the will of God":** Discuss the conversation Samuel had with Mother Teresa. What did she mean when she said the following? "I'm not looking for the will of God, and there are no steps to climb to find the will of God: I am the will of God."

Application

Ensure the discussion is specifically drawing on your local setting. Make sure the discussion is relevant to the lives of faith for your small group. Encourage relevant and thoughtful examples from each participant.

1. **Strategic Denominational Leadership** (leading a diverse group of people & churches): What are practical ways that churches can help people embrace their unique identities (including their ethnicity), while at the same time embracing the idea of the “household of God” and the “new humanity in Jesus Christ”?
2. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership:** How can your ministry develop leaders who are committed to ministering in the Spirit, to church growth, to Bible knowledge, to conflict-transformation, to deep discipleship, and to integrity in ministry?
3. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership:** Over the next 12 months, how will your ministry prioritize and cultivate (1) personal effectiveness management, (2) leadership excellence, (3) passionate discipleship, and (4) engagement in the mission of Jesus?
4. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership:** Take some time to reflect on the image of the Shepherd. What does it mean to be an effective, excellent, shepherding leader? How will you apply the concepts of shepherding to your ministry?
5. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership:** Journal ways that you will prioritize (and seek to grow in) character and integrity and faithfulness in ministry.
6. **Effective, Excellent, Shepherding Leadership:** How will you help your leaders (and/or yourself) move from “strategic planning” to “strategic intent” and “strategic conversations”?
7. **The New Humanity in Jesus Christ:** If you’re in leadership, help your team reflect on the implications of the 3 great metaphors Samuel uses. What do they mean for your team, church and mission? (1) The imagery of the Tower of Babel. (2) The imagery of Pentecost. (3) The imagery of the Household of God, and the New Humanity of Jesus Christ.
8. **The New Humanity in Jesus Christ:** Ask yourself: “How do does my love of power, control, influence or wealth affect the way I relate to others?” (And especially those that are not a part of the powerful or dominant culture)? What needs to change?
9. **Managing Resources and Assets:** What things do you need to do this year, to free up and use resources for the sake of ministry and mission?
10. **Managing Resources and Assets:** Have you fallen into the trap of seeing things as assets, and people as liabilities (say, for instance, in your budget)? How will you reshape this thinking?
11. **Strategic Denominational & Local Church Leadership** (leading a diverse group of people & churches): How will your church create space for “those who think differently”? How will you encourage and listen to those who challenge the status quo? How will you pay attention to those who offer alternative opinions? How will you nurture prophetic and uncomfortable voices?
12. **Being a People in Diaspora:** “The people of the kingdom of God are always in a diasporic state in any given culture.” Think on this. Write a list of ways that this notion will reshape the way you relate to money, refugees, politics, cultures, mission, church, discipleship, family, and more.
13. **Living as “the will of God”:** How will you move from merely trying to discern the will of God, to being the will of God in your context?

Informing community

Facilitate the space for your group to respond to the discussion. You might consider this section as a personal time of written journal responses to the following questions.

1. What is God encouraging me, our small group and our community, to do?

2. In response to the issues raised in the video, what are areas I want to ask God for forgiveness in? How do I need to change? What does God want me to stand up for?
3. How do I need God to minister to me and my community, for us to better engage with the contextual issues of our community?
4. How can I gain a better understanding of leadership and living as the “new humanity in Christ”? What do we ask that God would do in our hearts?

Prayer

Spend time in prayer over what you've learnt.

Invite the ministry of the Holy Spirit to clarify, heal, and inspire change for your participants and communities.

Links

Website: www.theglobalchurchproject.com

Book: Graham Hill, *GlobalChurch: Reshaping Our Conversations, Renewing Our Mission, Revitalizing Our Churches* (IVP Academic, 2015)