

The GlobalChurch Project
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Karina Kreminski

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.

Materials:

Video: Karina Kreminski, 25 minutes. Themes explored in this video:

- **Gender and the Reign of God**
- **Missional Spirituality**

Participants are encouraged to bring their own journals or writing materials.

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 Karina's responses?
2. How does Karina describe the kingdom of God?
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 Karina's theology informed and shaped by her practical ministry? What approaches does she take in understanding God in the context of her day-to-day experiences and ministry?

Going deeper

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

1. **Gender and the Reign of God:** What does Karina mean, when she says that we need to recognize that gender is a broken characteristic in humanity?

2. **Gender and the Reign of God:** How does the brokenness of gender and gender relationships manifest itself in the church? Is it similar to society, or different?
3. **Gender and the Reign of God:** How does the church wrap gender dysfunction in theology or biblical interpretation, and allow certain forms of dysfunction to grow or remain?
4. **Gender and the Reign of God:** Do you agree that the church often takes its gender narratives from society, rather than from Christian theology and faith?
5. **Gender and the Reign of God:** How do we identify and critique the contributions and deficiencies of cultural narratives on gender?
6. **Gender and the Reign of God:** How does Karina describe the “kingdom of God”?
7. **Gender and the Reign of God:** According to Karina, what does a kingdom of God perspective on gender look like?
8. **Gender and the Reign of God:** How might themes such as servanthood, justice, and reconciliation shape the relationships between women and men, and speak into divisions?
9. **Gender and the Reign of God:** How do the loving relationships within the Trinity provide an image for ideal relationships between women and men? How does it speak into divisions? How do Trinitarian relationships challenge gender relationships to cultivate difference, complementarity, mutual submission, and surrender of power?
10. **Gender and the Reign of God:** What does it mean to submit to each other in mutual relationships?
11. **Gender and the Reign of God:** Discuss the way in which we can practically apply these ideas, with an outward, missional posture (addressing these issues from a kingdom perspective: equality, domestic violence, objectification of girls and women, identity, gender wars, etc.).
12. **Gender and the Reign of God:** How can the church be more on top of issues such as domestic violence? How can the church take the lead on such issues, being vocal and standing up, rather than being on the “back foot”?
13. **Missional Spirituality:** According to Karina, how does a missional spirituality look different than other forms of spirituality?
14. **Missional Spirituality:** Read Karina’s article at the Missio Alliance website here: <http://www.missioalliance.org/missional-spirituality/> Discuss what it means for missional spirituality to be embodied, this-worldly, service-oriented, engaged, incarnational, cruciform, and trinitarian.
15. **Missional Spirituality:** Read another one of Karina’s articles at the Missio Alliance here: <http://www.missioalliance.org/practices-missional-spirituality-part-two/> Discuss what it means for missional spirituality to exegete the neighborhood, practice radical acts of hospitality, pray with eyes open, and read Scripture in public spaces.
16. **Missional Spirituality:** Define the *missio Dei* and talk about the implications of *missio Dei* for Christian spirituality.

David Bosch defines *missio Dei* this way: “[In the *missio Dei*] mission is understood as being derived from the very nature of God. It was thus put in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity, not of ecclesiology or

soteriology. The classical doctrine on the *missio Dei* as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit was expanded to include yet another “movement”: The Father, Son and the Holy Spirit sending the church into the world. As far as missionary thinking was concerned, this linking with the doctrine of the Trinity constituted an important innovation... Our mission has not life of its own: only in the hands of the sending God can it truly be called mission. Not least since the missionary initiative comes from God alone... Mission is thereby seen as a movement from God to the world; the church is viewed as an instrument for that mission. There is church because there is mission, not vice versa. To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God’s love toward people, since God is a fountain of sending love.” (David Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 389-390).

17. **Missional Spirituality:** According to Karina, how is contemplation connected with engagement in the world?

18. **Missional Spirituality:** How does Karina define these 4 features of missional spirituality? How does she say they affect missional spirituality?

- Spirit-filled
- Kenotic
- Trinitarian
- Incarnational

19. **Missional Spirituality:** How do we discern what God is up to in the world, and join with him in what he’s doing there?

20. **Missional Spirituality:** According to Karina, what are the practices that cultivate a missional spirituality?

21. **Missional Spirituality:** Discuss these 4 practices, and how they might help us form a missional spirituality.

- Exegeting your neighborhood
- Praying for your eyes open
- Reading Scripture in a public place
- Engage in radical acts of hospitality, at least once per week (especially serving among those who are marginalized, through words, service, and acts of kindness)

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. **Gender and the Reign of God:** How can your church or ministry begin to respond to the brokenness of gender and sexuality in your church and culture?

2. **Gender and the Reign of God:** How does the brokenness of gender and gender relationships manifest itself in your church? What will you do about this?

3. **Gender and the Reign of God:** Has your church or ministry taken its gender narratives from society, rather than from Christian theology and faith? How will you change this?

4. **Gender and the Reign of God:** What are some practical ways that your church or ministry can explore themes such as servanthood, justice, and reconciliation, and allow them to shape the relationships between women and men?

5. **Gender and the Reign of God:** If you have a spouse or partner, how are you pursuing and

practicing “mutual submission”? If you’re single, how are you honoring and respecting members of the opposite sex, seeking their wellbeing and human flourishing?

6. **Gender and the Reign of God:** Spend some time listing practical ways your church can respond to gender inequality, domestic violence, objectification of girls and women, marred sexual identities, gender wars, etc.). Then, make concrete commitments to do these things.

7. **Gender and the Reign of God:** Brainstorm ways your church or ministry can be more on top of issues such as domestic violence—being vocal and standing up, rather than being on the “back foot.” Now make concrete plans to do this.

8. **Missional Spirituality:** Read Karina’s article at the Missio Alliance website here: <http://www.missioalliance.org/missional-spirituality/> As an individual (or in a small group or ministry team), brainstorm ways that your Christian spirituality can be (and express) each of these 7 things. Take stock every few months on how you’re progressing, and make adjustments if needed, until you’re expressing a missional spirituality.

- Disembodied vs. Embodied
- This-Worldly vs. Other-Worldly
- Service-Oriented vs. Self-Actualized
- Engaging vs. Withdrawing
- Incarnational vs. Excarnational
- Cruciformly vs. Upward Mobility
- Trinitarian vs. Individualistic

9. **Missional Spirituality:** Read another one of Karina’s articles at the Missio Alliance here: <http://www.missioalliance.org/practices-missional-spirituality-part-two/> As an individual (or in a small group or ministry team), brainstorm ways that you and your group can do each of these 4 things. Take stock every few months on how you’re progressing, and make adjustments if needed, until you’re expressing a missional spirituality.

- Exegeting your neighborhood
- Praying for your eyes open
- Reading Scripture in a public place
- Engage in radical acts of hospitality, at least once per week (especially serving among those who are marginalized, through words, service, and acts of kindness)

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 spirituality for mission? 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

Other Resources:

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

Karina Kreminski's articles:

- <http://www.missioalliance.org/missional-spirituality/>
- <http://www.missioalliance.org/practices-missional-spirituality-part-two/>