



William Thurmond

Lessons learned from almost 60 years of pastoral and spiritual leadership

Discussion Guide

This resource is designed to help your small group or college class discussion. It's shaped to inspire you to consider new ways to understand the issues discussed in this video. You don't need to answer all the questions. Please allow time for discussion and response.

Materials

1. Person Interviewed: William Thurmond
2. Theme of Video: Lessons learned from almost 60 years of pastoral and spiritual leadership

Preliminary discussion

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

1. What were the major themes in this video?
2. How do those themes relate to your life and context?
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 the interviewee's theology and outlook informed and shaped by their practical ministry and context? What approaches do they take in understanding God in the context of their daily life and ministry?

Explore and apply

Explore the major themes raised in the video. Critically engage with the theology. Consider the questions that respond to the issues raised in your preliminary discussion. Apply the answers to these questions in your own setting. 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 or college class. Encourage relevant and thoughtful examples from each participant.

1. William Thurmond has served as a pastor (and as a shepherd of pastors) for almost 60 years. How did he enter pastoral ministry, and come to Park Windsor Baptist Church? What is he now doing in retirement?
2. What did you learn about the history, church life, and ministries of Park Windsor Baptist, and about its neighborhood?
3. How has the church sought to shift from an exclusive focus on African Americans to reaching its Hispanic neighborhood?
4. Over the years, the church transitioned from mainly white Caucasian, to mainly African American, to now a multi-ethnic church (Caucasian, African American, and Hispanic). How did the church transition in its sense of identity, focus, body life, and mission?
5. What were the challenges and issues for such a transition?
6. What strategies were used to overcome barriers to this transition?
7. What signs of hope and renewal emerged during this transition?
8. What are the implications for the future of African American churches, and for churches in general?
9. What is William Thurmond's vision for multi-ethnic and multi-cultural churches?
10. William Thurmond is a "pastor's pastor." What skills and qualities does he think that pastors need today?
11. How do we root our vision and practice of church and pastoring in Scripture?
12. How do we be sensitive to the culture, without allowing it to trump the gospel?
13. How does William Thurmond teach congregations to be good stewards?
14. How does he focus on leadership development?
15. How can the church respond to racial tensions today?
16. What else jumped out at you while listening to this interview?

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 our group and me, 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 the issues discussed in this video? 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

Books:

Graham Hill, *GlobalChurch: Reshaping Our Conversations, Renewing Our Mission, Revitalizing Our Churches* (IVP Academic, 2016).

Graham Hill, *Salt, Light, and a City (Second Edition): Ecclesiology for the Global Missional Community: Volume 1, Western Voices* (Cascade, 2017).