

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

# Simple Shifts: Foundations - Episode 240

## *Simple Shifts (Part 2)*

This series is called **simple shifts**. It's not called big shifts. It's not called monumental changes. It's not called significant pivots. But yes, some changes actually **are** necessary for us to continue to accomplish our mission.

After all, we follow a God who has demonstrated a desire for change. There are many instances where he has advocated for *new*. Consider these:

- “Don’t long for ‘the good old days.’ This is not wise.” (Ecclesiastes 7:10, NLT)
- “Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.” (Isaiah 43:18-19, NIV)

There’s a lot of trading *old* for *new* in these words. There’s no doubt about it—we can hold fast to the things God promises will *not* change. However, God also promises *new*.

## *Foundations: Simple Shifts to Our Mission & Vision*

**Problem #1:** Our church is located in the same mission field, but the needs of the people we are hoping to reach are changing.

**Shift #1:** We need to get refocused on the people we are trying to reach in our mission field.

- Revisit the demographic information of your mission field.
- Among all those people, determine who exactly you will focus on reaching.
- Ask: What’s most important to the person you are trying to reach?
- Then consider, how can your ministry respond to those needs? How can your teaching and content strategy speak to those needs?
- We really need to think like missionaries in our own community again.

**Problem #2:** Many people in our community are dealing with the consequences of the pandemic.

**Shift #2:** We need to be more intentional about our compassion for people around us.

- We need to make sure that we’re teaching on these topics in our Sunday services.

- Providing recommended content and resources that people can access as needed:
  - [\*Out of the Cave: Stepping into the Light when Depression Darkens What You See\*](#) by Chris Hodges
  - [\*Winning the War in Your Mind: Change Your Thinking, Change Your Life\*](#) by Craig Groeschel
- Consider teaching a series on one of those books and encourage everyone in your church to buy a copy and read through it together. You can also create discussion guides for your Bible study groups and home groups to go through these books at the same time.
- Consider linking to recommended counselors and organizations in your community on your church website. One church we worked with opened their building one night a week for counselors to come in and serve people in their congregation/community.
- We need other people. Encourage people to connect with others through groups and serving teams.

**Problem #3:** We are still living out a vision for our ministry that we embraced pre-pandemic that now seems out-dated and irrelevant.

**Shift #3:** We need to hold tightly to our mission, but be more open-handed with the vision God has for our ministry in the future.

- Set aside a couple of days with a team of 8-12 staff and/or lay leaders to pray, dream and discuss what God has next for your ministry. (Pastors, you don't need to do this alone).
- Picture what you want for the future, but don't think about the obstacles. Ask yourself what you would attempt if you knew you could not fail.
  - Be bold. Think big. It might start as a completely crazy idea... but incremental change will not inspire your team or your congregation. Free your mind to explore what could be accomplished.
- Put yourself five years into the future and try to imagine what your future looks like. What does it feel like? What do you hear? Who do you see?
  - Don't get stuck on how it will come to fruition. How you will accomplish this future direction will be defined after you agree on these bold moves. Put the "how" question aside for now.
  - Put down the past. When you are dreaming of what could be, don't let your past experiences or past methods hinder your creativity. Think like a church planter with a clean slate and no history to overcome.
- This is not a mission or vision statement. This is not about things you value. This is not about strategies you will implement. Instead, you are trying to discover the next mountain God wants you to take and name the mountain.

## *Next Steps*

We've been operating in *reactive* crisis mode over the last couple years—but it's time to start dreaming about the future again. When you do that, you may be surprised at how much this energizes your team and creates alignment and unity.

As the pastor and leader, you too will be refreshed and renewed with a fresh vision of what God might have for your church going forward.

## *Discover the Unstuck Process*

For more than a decade, we've helped **500+ churches of all sizes** clarify their vision (where they believe God's called them to go) and their strategies (how they are going to get there). In everything that we do, our priority is to help churches help people **meet and follow Jesus**.

[Learn more](#) about how The Unstuck Group can serve your leadership and your ministry, or [start a conversation](#) today.

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