

## Other Missional Churches & Our Struggles

by: Rob Wegner

### *What churches are you following that are living out missional communities?*

Other churches that we're looking to are Mike Breen and the 3DM crew that came out of St. Thomas Crookes Church, which is basically comprised of scores of missional communities. When you think of Sheffield, which is where they were from, less than three percent were churched. They've built their church from the ground up with missional communities, and then they've gone on to plant another 700 additional churches in Europe. It's just flat out inspiring.

We've really leaned into the resources they're offering and it's tremendous stuff. In fact, 3DM's book, *Launching Missional Communities*, is a must read for anybody who is serious about missional communities. I would definitely pick that up if you don't have it.

Then, there's the Soma guys, Jeff and Caesar, and their crew. Again, they're not just in post-Christian country up there; they're in anti-Christian country. I mean, they've built this thing ground up with missional communities, it's flat out inspiring.

So, those are two. And I'm not just brown-nosing but Austin Stone is a huge inspiration. I've learned a lot from Todd and your crew and what has happened on the campus there is amazing in terms of the explosive growth you guys have seen there. So, those are three places that we're for sure learning from.

### *What successes or struggles have you seen?*

The biggest struggle for us has been the whole process of helping our people completely rethink church. We've been on that for probably 18 months straight, and it feels like we've finally reached this tipping point where people are really getting it.

We're going up against 1,700 years of a predominant paradigm of what church is. A little phrase like *go to church* seems so harmless, but it's *not* harmless; it's a very deeply seated definition of what church is, and how it works, and it is the way everyone sees church, and more so even for people who have grown up in church.

Helping people make this shift to *church is not a destination; it's to daily live life in the way Jesus did*. The church is not a building; it's a body. And it's my body, and if I'm a part of Jesus, I take the church with me into the world because in the deepest way possible, I am the church.

And the church isn't a religious event. It's this *every-day* mission in *every* area of life in *every* domain of society. So that's just something that I think we ought to be relentless about. You have to just come back to it again and again and again. And come at it as many different ways as you can, as creatively as you can. You have to shift the *why* before the *what*.

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The *why* is that we have to shift our understanding of the gospel. We have to get away from this very radically reduced understanding, where it's basically me finding out what are the bare minimum requirements to get into heaven when I die.

We have to have a much more robust understanding that the gospel, the kingdom, is not just about personal transformation, but world transformation. So that's something that we have to address. Secondly is our ecclesiology, which we've been talking about. And then thirdly, eschatology, because a lot of folks are thinking the whole thing is going down, so what's the point anyway?

So we're helping people make that shift to say, "Hey, you know what? The end is not the destruction of all things, but the redemption of all things." The biggest struggle is to make that deep paradigm shift in those three areas. If we make that shift, then we have the robust *why* behind the *what*.

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