

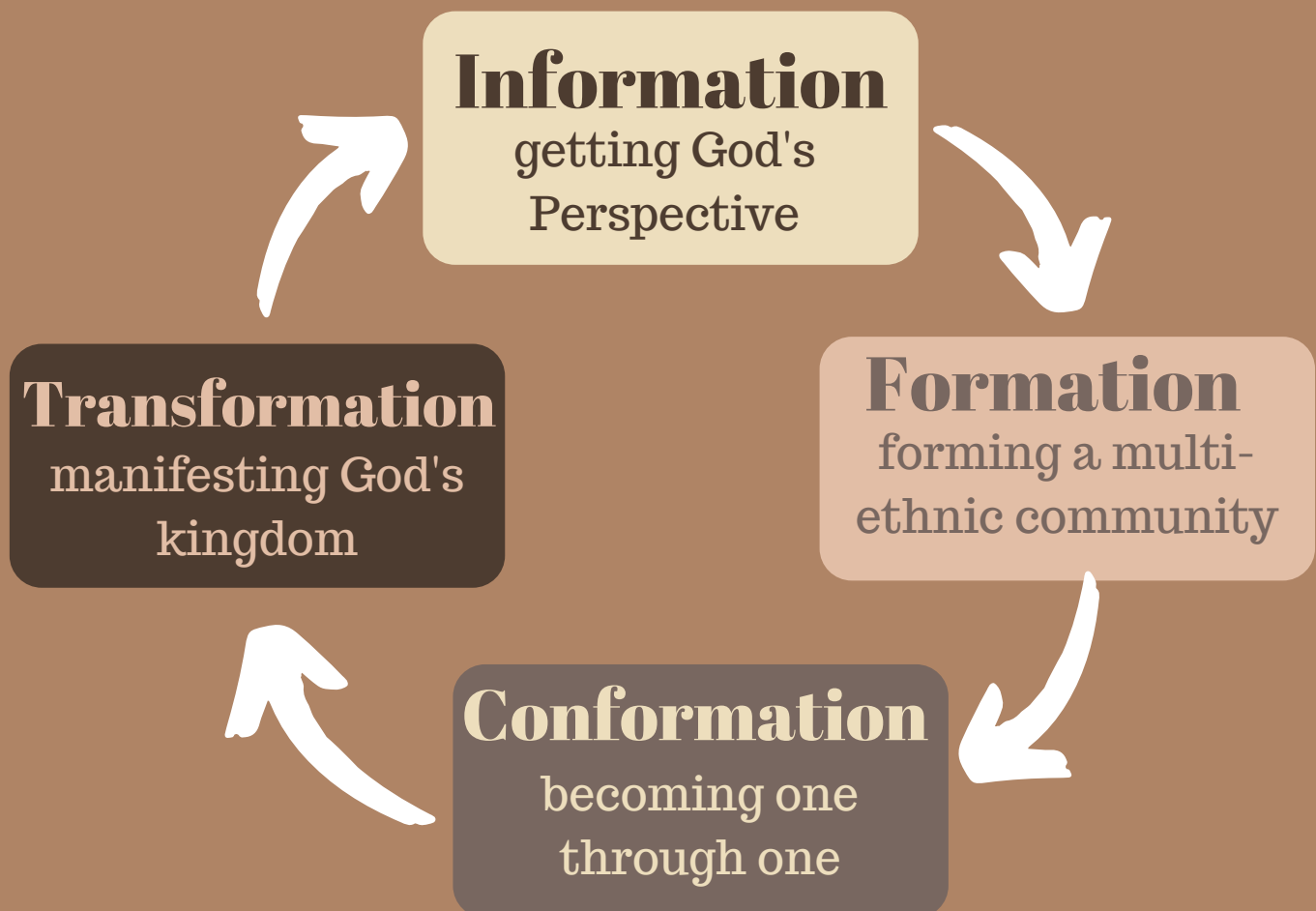


DIVERSITY RUBRIC

@BELKISLEHMANN

The Diversity Development Rubric shows the four stages/components of Biblical diversity. They are stages in that each stage provides a foundation for the following one. They are components in that each is needed at all times. Even though it may take us a while to achieve transformation we still need to see it as our end goal when we start out.

Our goal is not just to gather a diverse group of individuals, but to build a community so conformed to the image of Christ that we have both a platform and a body through which God can bring the transformation of his kingdom to the world. Lastly, they are elements in that they are always needed, no matter the current stage of development. At each stage, we must continue to reach for God's vision of kingdom diversity and pray for transformation in our own hearts to live it out.



Information getting God's Perspective

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is. - Romans 12:1

Information, provides the framework for the work to be done. It is really about getting God's perspective. We are born into this world and are shaped by it and programmed to think about ourselves and others in a certain way. We must dedicate ourselves to the study of God's word, renewing our mind, so as to be transformed from our earthly way of thinking, into understanding what God's will is.

We need transformation in understanding the sacredness of God's creation and how every nation is descended from one man (Acts 17:26) and that our ethnic identity is eternal (Rev. 7:9). Additionally, we must know that the family of God is made up of every nation and that God's desire is for us to live in complete unity, a unity which testifies the Gospel to the world (John 17:21). Furthermore, we must strive to live the ethic of the kingdom (Mt. 5:1-15, Luke 4:18-19) and practice the ministry of reconciliation which includes reconciling people to God and each other (2 Cor. 5:16-21, Eph. 2:14-22).

These basic but powerful truths must be fully embraced in order to combat the lies of the evil one that has long influenced the minds of believers. Along with understanding, we must teach our congregation these wonderful truths and pray earnestly for transformation in each mind and heart.

In addition to educating ourselves regarding to the truth of Scripture, we must inform ourselves regarding our community. Who is in our neighborhoods but lacking in our community? Statistical information must be gathered. In addition to numbers, we must also seek understanding of the cultures around us, their history, norms, and morays, and must pray through how to connect to serve them. This will prepare us to move on to the next phase.

Summary: pray, study, seek, relate, teach, expose, repent, identify, and strategize

Formation creating multi- ethnic community

His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. - Eph. 2:15-16

Formation is to about creating a Christian community that mirrors the the nations/ethnos that live in and among us. This phase will require a lot of adaptation on our part. We must take the information we learned in phase one and use it determine what changes we must make to attract, evangelize, relate to, and serve those we have not previously connected with.

This will not be easy. If we have not done a good job teaching our current congregation regarding God's vision for diversity and his desire for his body to be heaven on earth, then we may alienate the faithful. Unfortunately, some of this cannot be avoided. Our modern church model is to "feed" our congregants. Many rebel from being called do adjust and even die to their own needs in order to serve those outside the church. We cannot let this deter us.

On the other hand, we must be "wise as serpents, but meek as doves." We must move forward with wisdom from God praying earnestly at each step of the way. We must remind ourselves that we do not war against flesh and blood. People are not our enemies. It is Satan, the accuser, who seeks to segregate the church so that we do not accurately represent Jesus to the world.

In this stage three principles will guide us: principle of the other, hospitality, and family. Before we adapt our spaces we must enter the spaces of the "other". Being uncomfortable and inconvenienced. We must make room for the stranger by preparing a place for him/her that is comfortable and familiar. These means thinking through everything we do: our music, food, and other traditions. Lastly, we must work to be a family, a place where everyone is valued and their contributions are valued. It's not enough to invite folks to our house, it must become theirs- a place where they can decorate the walls. Anything less than is not a healthy family.

Summary: Pray, seek, adapt, serve, evangelize, relate, call, and be-friend

Conformation

becoming one
people

"For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters." - Romans 8:29

Conformation is the process of becoming conformed to the image of Christ, individually and corporately. We must make room for the Holy Spirit's supernatural work to transform a group of individuals into a true kingdom community. How does this take place? It happens as we abandon our own cultural allegiance and seek instead to be conformed to our Father's kingdom culture.

We are all born into a culture, a way of thinking and viewing the world, a filter by which we interpret information. In many ways, Christian discipleship is the process by which we leave behind our culture of origin and instead embrace the culture of God's kingdom. We see the places where our filters are in conflict with the truth of Scripture and slowly, by the Spirit's work, we are transformed into new ways of thinking and acting. Our values, perspectives, priorities, and desires change. It is such a huge transformation Jesus called it being born again.

One of the problems with our history of segregation in the church is that it has allowed each culture to create its own definition of kingdom culture. We have taken our own values and filters and labeled them God's. Three pitfalls we must avoid here: assimilation, superficiality, cultural control. We must make disciples that look like Christ not us. We must have the difficult conversations that will take our relationships beyond the superficial and into true depth. We must allow God's kingdom values to dominate over our own cultures (and we all have cultures).

Directed honest and open conversation is essential in this stage.

Summary: Pray, encourage, relate, discuss, understand, challenge, confront, heal, repent, forgive, and encourage

Transformation manifesting the kingdom

"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." - Matthew 6:10


Transformation, is to see outside of our Christian communities. The kingdom that Jesus announced is good news to the poor, liberty for the captives, and recovery of sight for the blind (Luke 4:18). It called its followers to live by a radical new ethic where they put the needs of others, especially the underserved and marginalized first. It was this gospel that turned the world upside down in just a couple of generations.

Unfortunately, there has been a shift over the past few hundred years from a gospel of the kingdom—the good news that the rule of God is now with men—to a gospel of personal salvation. The former called believers to do the works of the kingdom as a response to their personal experience with God. The latter has reduced the gospel to a ticket to heaven that separates private life from public influence. As a result, believers are no longer working to transform the world around us.

Like the early disciples, we serve a resurrected Lord who defeated hell, death, and the grave. We have a gospel of power to share with the world. A multi-ethnic local congregation that is truly conformed to the image of the Son, is a powerful weapon.

First, it manifests the gospel of reconciliation by its very existence. When situations such as Ferguson happen, it has a voice to share with the community, a credible voice that will be listened to. Secondly, by having worked through the racial and ethnic discord we were born in to, they are able to work together through Biblical justice issues with grace and wisdom. They will not be driven by political or cultural perspectives, but by God's views and desires. Thus, they can serve the community around them without hidden agenda or bias. The world is starving for a witness of the true God that is more than words, and even more than charitable actions. It needs today the same thing it needed 2,000 years ago—an accurate picture of the Father "in the flesh". Jesus perfectly represented the Father in his life (Hebrews 1:3). The church of God, the body of Christ, can be God's vehicle of transformation again if it is informed, formed, and conformed.

Summary: Pray, investigate, serve, support, invest, heal, reconcile, and advocate



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