

MEFC Community Group Study Questions

For the Week of January 26th - February 1st

Getting Started

1. Our church's 2020 Vision was composed of a series of seven lag measures. A lag measure is specific quantifiable goal which we either achieve or don't achieve (i.e. raising up 30 reproducing leaders, establishing the *Harbor Center for Biblical Counseling* with 5 certified counselors, commissioning 2 households for global missions, etc).

What was helpful about approaching a church-wide vision built around lag indicators? On the other hand, focusing only lag indicators does have its disadvantages. Can you think of any? If so, please share with the group.

Digging Deeper

2. Over the next five years, we believe it will please the Lord if we focus our 2025 Vision on *lead* measures as opposed to lag measures. If *lag* measures are about the *product*, lead measures focus on the *process* that produces the product. While lag measures track *success* of a goal, lead measures track the *activities* that drive a lag measure.

What do you think? Do you see the wisdom in training our attention on lead (as opposed to lag) indicators? What might this approach to our vision for 2025 yield that our vision for 2020 did not? Discuss as a group.

3. Our 2025 Vision boils down to three words: *prayer, care, share*. God helping us, we are going to become very familiar with them over the next five years. By God's grace we are a church that has the gospel *right*, so by God's grace we want to become a church that gets the gospel *out*. How do you see each aspect of this three-step pathway to outreach working together in order to achieve our aim of welcoming 75 newly baptized covenant members by January 2025?

4. Would you say that MEFC is a 'praying church'? What concrete evidences of God's mercy do you already see as it relates to being a church that seeks to cultivate dependence upon Christ? On the other hand, in what ways do you sense some room for improvement?

5. One tool for growth with which we'll become familiar is John Piper's prayer acronym "F.A.D.E.S." Each letter stands for a different angle on the *how* of prayer: **F**ree & **F**ormed (regarding the content of our prayers), **A**lone & **A**ssembled (with whom we pray), **D**elighted & **D**esperate (our various heart conditions in prayer), **E**xplosive & **E**xtended (length of our prayers), **S**pontaneous & **S**cheduled (when we pray).

Take a moment to discuss these various aspects of prayer.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/be-devoted-to-prayer>

The link above takes you to the full audio recording of the original sermon as well as the manuscript from which F.A.D.E.S. is drawn. Which part of F.A.D.E.S. challenges you the most? Where do you need the most help? Why?

6. The second aspect of our 2025 Vision will be a significant investment in our church's compassion

and mercy ministry. Throughout the New Testament, one of the phrases we see repeatedly that captures this concern is “good works”. Take some time and ponder these Scriptures as a group: *Matthew 5:16; Acts 9:36; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Timothy 2:10; 1 Timothy 5:10; 5:25; 6:18; Titus 2:8, 14; 3:8, 14; and Hebrews 10:24.*

Why does God place such a premium on good works, particularly in view of the fact that our justification is by grace through faith in Christ apart from works (Romans 4:4-5; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5)?

Over the next five years, with the Lord’s help, we intend to complement our compassion ministry of **feeding** the hungry with initiatives such as **housing** the homeless, **clothing** the needy, **helping** the helpless, **rescuing** the unborn and **adopting** the fatherless. Which of these six areas of mercy ministry move you the most? In what practical ways would you like to assist us in the development of our compassion ministry?

7. While we certainly desire to demonstrate the mercy of Christ to our unbelieving neighbors, it’s even more essential that we grow in our communication of the gospel of Christ. Our main strategy in evangelistic outreach with those on our ‘List of 5’ will be the B.L.E.S.S. practices (**B**e in prayer for them, **L**isten to them, **E**at with them, look for opportunities to **S**erve them, to **S**hare your story and especially to Share God’s story in the gospel with them). Which of these come easiest to you? Why? Which are more difficult? How come? Talk about these things as a group.

8. Though the heartbeat of our 2025 Vision is comprised of three interrelated lead measures, there is one major lag measure that we’ll use to chart our progress. We are looking to *welcome 75 newly baptized covenant members* into our church family by January 2025. How do Jesus’ words in John 15:5 help us to think about this goal? How about Jesus and Paul’s words in Matthew 7:7-11 or Philippians 4:13? Close your time as a group by praying over the various lead measures (and the one lag measure) of our 2025 Vision. We have much to anticipate in the days ahead. Your elders are full of faith toward God’s good designs for us in the coming days. How about you? Are you ready for the 2025 Vision?

Sermon Notes for 1/26/20
Colossians 4:2-6
“The 2025 Vision of Mound Evangelical Free Church”

➤ **The mission of Mound Evangelical Free Church is to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ**

**Therefore, in our 2025 Vision, God is calling us to...*

Prayer

1. Cultivate _____ upon Christ (vv.2-4; Luke 11:1)

Care

2. Demonstrate the _____ of Christ (v.5; Titus 2:14)

Share

3. Communicate the _____ of Christ (v.6; Mark 16:15)

...welcoming _____ newly baptized covenant members by January 2025

Next Week: “Zealous for Good Works”: *An Overview of the Letter to Titus*