



MINISTRY

MYTHS

THE 5 ASSUMPTIONS THAT STALL DISCIPLE-MAKING MOVEMENTS

A CHURCH ASSESSMENT TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY WHAT MYTHS YOU MAY BE BELIEVING

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

DID YOU KNOW?

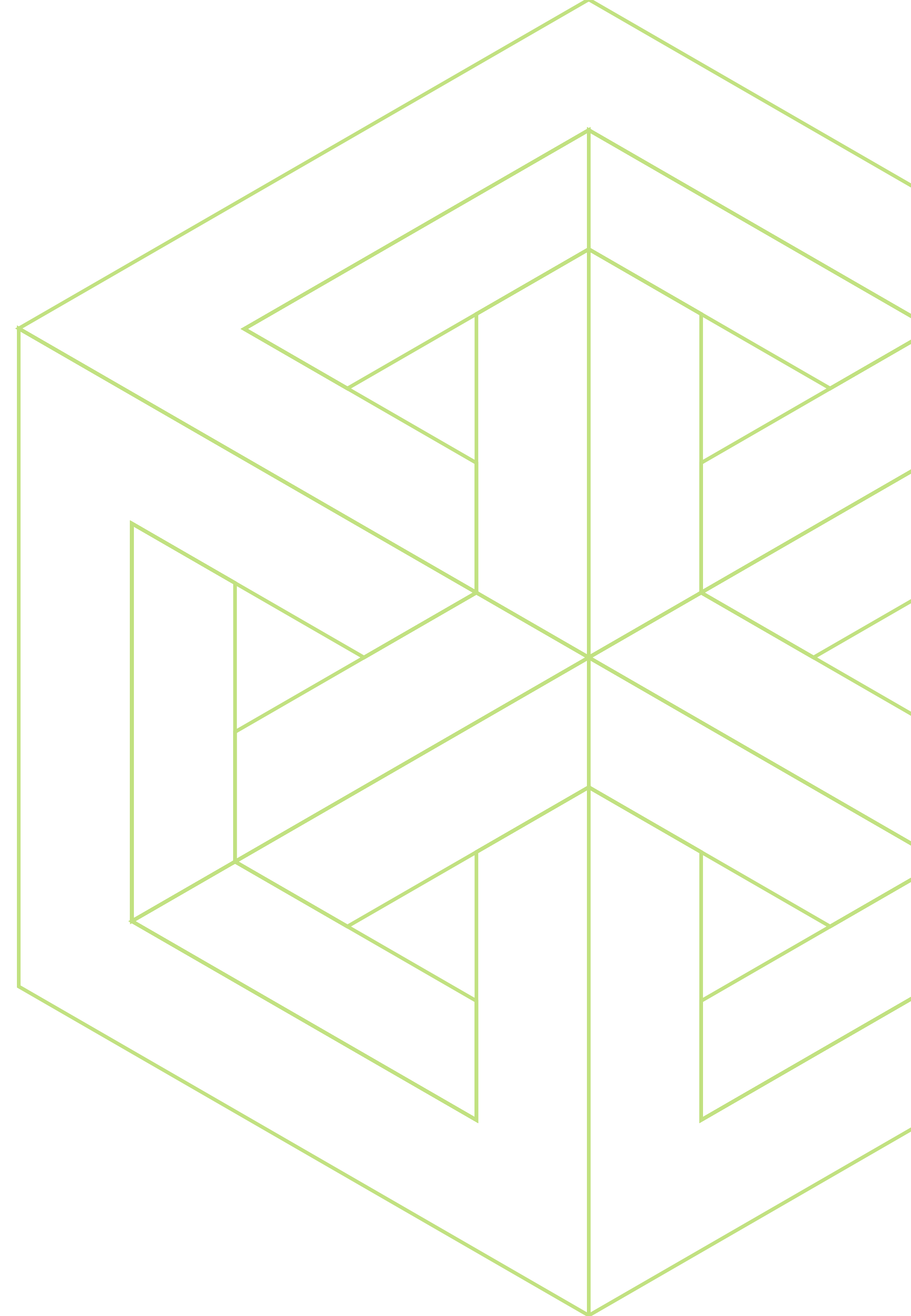
That the color red does NOT make bulls angry. Bats aren't blind. If you shave your hair, it doesn't come back thicker. Dogs can see more than black and white. If you touch a baby bird with your bare hands, its mother won't reject it. And cracking your knuckles won't give you arthritis.

Each of these commonly held beliefs are myths that have been accepted as truth. Discerning between what is truth and what is myth can be exceptionally hard. We come to believe myths to be true for many reasons: an expert told us so, everyone else around us believed it, that's how we always thought about it, we thought our personal experience validated it, the myth seemed logical or the truth seemed absurd.

What if there are myths in ministry that we have accepted as truth for the exact same reason?

A myth gets accepted as truth for one reason: Assumption. Many of us have accepted myths as truth because we assumed too much. Similarly, the church has made assumptions about church and leadership. Over the last 2,000 years, the church has drifted from making Christ's final words its first work. Instead of leading an all-play, everyday disciple-making movement, it has settled for something far less. The result leaves us saying, "There has to be more..."

Below are the five myths that the North American Church has been most inclined to accept as truth. Behind each myth, you will see the assumption that the leadership believed, the common practice of the church, the impact it has had on the people, and the feeling that it has left amongst the leadership and the congregation.



HOW TO USE THIS ASSESSMENT

To get the most out of this assessment, you will do four things:

LEARN

For each of the five myths, there will be a quick summary to help you understand the key insights.

ASSESS

Below are five statements for each myth. Score your church on each statement between 1-4 on how well it describes your church. At the end of each section, add up the scores and place your score out of 20. Below are some examples:

1 - This is NOT us:

Examples: "Our church never does those things;" "Our church isn't even aware of this;" "Our staff doesn't know and/or prioritize this;" "Our church's current solution doesn't accomplish this at all"

2 - This is somewhat us:

Examples: "We sometimes do this;" "Our church's current solution somewhat accomplishes that;" "Some of our staff members do this."

3 - This is mostly us:

Examples: "We are pretty good at this;" "Our church's current solution mostly accomplishes this;" "Most of our staff does this;" "We hope to soon be known for this"

4 - This is definitely us:

Examples: "We almost always do this;" "That is one of our biggest passions;" "Our whole staff/congregation is bought into that;" "We are known for this."

SCORE

After assessing yourself on all five myths, you will add up each myth's score for a total score out of 100.

PLAN

Determine what your next step needs to be to activate your disciple-making movement.

MYTH	ASSUMPTION
ENGAGEMENT MYTH	Activity = Transformation
EXPERTISE MYTH	Ministry Excellence = Excellent Ministry
EQUIPPING MYTH	Teaching = Training
EMPOWERMENT MYTH	Filling Spots = Empowering People
EXECUTION MYTH	Church Impact = Ministry Ownership

MYTH	Engagement Myth
ASSUMPTION	Activity = Transformation
PRACTICE	Church success is driven by attendance-only metrics.
PROBLEM	Lack of disciple-making vision
OUTCOME	People without purpose
LEADERSHIP FEELING	Dissatisfied
CONGREGATION FEELING	Apathetic
SOLUTION	Push the Final Line Back

MYTH 1 **ACTIVITY=TRANSFORMATION**

THE ENGAGEMENT MYTH

How does your church measure success? Every church measures some form of activity. How many people attended worship, how many people are serving, how many are attending a group or class, etc. Though this is important to measure, it isn't the best way to measure success.

The fatal assumption made in the Engagement Myth is that all activity equals transformation. We over-value the impact that is made in attendance. The problem with this is that just because someone attends a church program doesn't mean that they are being transformed. When we only measure people's attendance in our programs, we make program activity the end goal, not individual transformation.

Without a clear picture of our church's mission and the disciple-making traits we are trying to form in our people, we have no clarity on what is a win. This leaves the staff confused on why we do certain programs and if they are succeeding. Additionally, because our congregation doesn't have a clear picture of who they are to become as they follow Jesus, they settle for believing that maturity is just about attending more programs. The result is a staff and congregation that replace disciple-making with program management, thus leaving the staff dissatisfied and the congregation apathetic.

ASSESS:

In each box, rate each statement between 1-4 on how well it describes your church. See page 3 for details.

- Our church has a contextual and catalytic mission statement that calls every person to make disciples where they live, work, and play.
- Our church has a clear and compelling definition of a Dream Disciple that gives our people a vivid picture of the most important character and competency traits of a disciple-maker at their church.
- Our church has a clear and effective strategy that helps us form our Dream Disciple.
- Our staff and key leaders are fully bought-in (attitude) and aligned (structure) around our church's strategy.
- Our church's strategy moves people beyond church programming towards making disciples through their existing relationships where they live, work, and play.

Total Score _____ /20

HOW DO WE BUST THIS MYTH? **PUSH THE FINISH LINE BACK**

When Christ measures the health of the church, he doesn't count them, he weighs them. Focusing on attendance to worship services, small groups, and volunteer teams is not wrong, but it is incomplete. We must **push the finish line back** and not just measure collective activity, but individual transformation. For us to accomplish this, we need a contextual and catalytic **mission statement** and a vivid picture of what our **Dream Disciple** looks like. We then can develop an effective and realistic strategy that helps us accomplish our all-play, everyday disciple-making movement.

THE EXPERTISE MYTH

Are your staff and key leaders exhausted? Does it feel like they are the only ones executing ministry while the congregation seems to be content to just watch? If so, you may struggle with the Expertise Myth.

The Expertise Myth is all about who is responsible for the church's mission. Many churches are frustrated because they wish their people were less consumer-driven and more contribution-driven. What often causes this dynamic in churches is the assumption that ministry excellence always equals excellent ministry.

Think about the last event, program, or group you did. What did you celebrate? Most churches celebrate how excellent the outcome was. This leads them to entrust leadership only to those who have the expertise and can ensure the best "final product." This unintentionally discourages the development of emerging leaders. We never make space for people to practice and step into leadership because the expert can always do it better and that is what matters most.

This thinking prevents people from stepping into the responsibility of being leading a ministry or discipling those in their circles of influence. They never feel like they can do it as well as the "experts," so they stay comfortable as they watch an exhausted staff do it.

ASSESS:

In each box, rate each statement between 1-4 on how well it describes your church. See page 3 for details.

- Our staff sees their primary responsibility as equipping the saints and not executing tasks and programs.
- Our church has a compelling, catalytic mission statement that the staff use to call people into a disciple-making lifestyle.
- Our staff regularly gives our people the authority to make decisions and develop others.
- Our staff is willing to trade a level of excellence in execution if it means developing an emerging leader.
- Our church has a significant number of leaders who own the leadership responsibility of church ministries and disciple-making.

Total Score _____ /20

HOW DO WE BUST THIS MYTH? BECOME HERO MAKERS

Our staff must shift its mentality from players to coaches. They are not meant to be the heroes that execute ministry, but the **Hero Makers** that equip their people for ministry. To do this, the staff must lean into the tension of providing ministry excellence while also empowering emerging leaders in the process. A catalytic **mission statement** that clearly communicates a "no sidelines" expectation serves as a constant reminder for the staff and the congregation that they are all called into an all-play team sport.

MYTH	Expertise Myth
ASSUMPTION	Ministry Excellence = Excellent Ministry
PRACTICE	Church relies predominately on staff for disciple-making and leading ministries.
PROBLEM	Lack of leadership opportunity
OUTCOME	People without responsibility
LEADERSHIP FEELING	Exhausted
CONGREGATION FEELING	Comfortable
SOLUTION	Become Hero Makers

MYTH 3 *TEACHING = TRAINING*

THE EQUIPPING MYTH

MYTH	Equipping Myth
ASSUMPTION	Teaching = Training
PRACTICE	The church's strategy includes minimum coaching environments.
PROBLEM	Lack of leadership development
OUTCOME	People without training
LEADERSHIP FEELING	Frustrated
CONGREGATION FEELING	Defeated
SOLUTION	Build A Training Center

What is a skill that you have become proficient in? Golf? Guitar? Cooking? How did you learn that skill? Who helped you along the way? What resources or tools helped you the most?

You learned your skill through a combination of consuming content, helpful resources, coaching, receiving feedback, and lots of practice.

With every other skill in life, we know that we need much more than information. For transformation, we have to put that information into practice and we need a guide to help hold us accountable and give us feedback. Though we understand how training works in every other area of our life, we don't apply it to disciple-making.

The church has made the assumption that all teaching equals training and then has wondered why its people aren't equipped. Its training is the equivalent of training to be a tennis player by only watching videos and talking with your friends about it. If you were to assess the church's equipping environments, you would find that there are very few spaces where disciple-making skills are modeled, practiced, and evaluated. Additionally, there are rarely places where people are held accountable to making disciples.

The result is that our people are educated beyond our obedience. Our people have plenty of knowledge, but our church doesn't have enough leaders. The staff is frustrated because they keep telling their people to make disciples while the congregation feels defeated because they simply don't know how.

ASSESS:

In each box, rate each statement between 1-4 on how well it describes your church. See page 3 for details.

- Our church's strategy includes intentionally designed, well-attended equipping environments that help people become disciple-makers.
- Our church's strategy includes training environments that inspire and equip disciple-making character and competencies.
- Our church staff provide ongoing (weekly or bi-weekly) coaching and care for leaders throughout the year.
- Our church has environments that provide personal accountability and feedback to help people become disciple-makers.
- Our church's equipping environments include time for disciple-making skills to be modeled, practiced, and evaluated.

Total Score _____ /20

HOW DO WE BUST THIS MYTH? BECOME A TRAINING CENTER

If our **Dream Disciple** includes both disciple-making character and competencies, we need a **Discipleship Pathway** that helps develop people to become this. We must develop a strategy that positions the church as a **training center**. It must both inspire people with the why of disciple-making and equip them practically for the how of disciple-making. Our strategy should include opportunities for people to practice and receive feedback on disciple-making skills like interpreting Scripture, sharing your faith, discipling other believers, and more. Closed, high-accountable groups like **Discipleship Groups** are great environments for busting the Equipping Myth.

MYTH 4 *FILLING SPOTS = EMPOWERING PEOPLE*

THE EMPOWERMENT MYTH

“I want to make a difference. What should I do?”

If a faithful church member asked your staff that question, how would they help them? Your staff’s response comes from one of two motivations: What best helps our organization? What best helps the individual?

The Empowerment Myth happens when we assume that filling spots in our programming is empowering people. Sometimes serving on a volunteer team is exactly what people need. The question is how do we direct them to it? Most churches don’t take the time to help their people discover their passions and gifts and find the best opportunity that matches how God has designed them.

When a church doesn’t emphasize personal calling in its discipleship strategy, it promotes a one-size-fits-all approach to leadership and disciple-making. This prevents people from stepping into their unique passions and gifts, thus making the process less life-giving both to them and those they serve.

The result is a leadership that overpromises and under-delivers. When we just fill spots in our church, it comes at the expense of our people. Their passions and gifts are underutilized and eventually, they get burnt out. Our volunteer opportunities facilitate connection and they help our church run its programs, but it doesn’t always help people discover and use their calling.

ASSESS:

In each box, rate each statement between 1-4 on how well it describes your church. See page 3 for details.

- The volunteer and leadership opportunities that our staff guides people towards is primarily driven by what best empowers their gifts and passions, not what best helps our programming needs.
- Our church has a process to learn people’s gifts and passions before placing them in a ministry opportunity.
- Our church intentionally celebrates people leveraging their passions and giftings even when it is outside of church programs.
- Our church has a process to help people discover their personal calling and create a plan for how they uniquely can make disciples through their existing relationships where they live, work, and play.
- Our church’s strategy includes helping our congregation members be a force for good in their workplaces, neighborhoods, and community.

Total Score _____ /20

HOW DO WE BUST THIS MYTH? EMPOWER EACH ONE

One of the most influential reasons people don’t disciple others is that they don’t believe they have anything valuable to offer others. The church must help each individual understand how God has uniquely designed them and how they can use their story, passions, and gifts to make disciples. The church’s strategy must **empower each one** by helping its people discover their calling and see how they can use it in their workplaces, neighborhoods, and communities.

MYTH	Empowerment Myth
ASSUMPTION	Filling Spots = Empowering People
PRACTICE	The church rarely helps people identify their uniqueness.
PROBLEM	Lack of personal calling emphasis
OUTCOME	People without self-awareness
LEADERSHIP FEELING	Deceived
CONGREGATION FEELING	Burnt out
SOLUTION	Empower Each One

MYTH 5 CHURCH IMPACT = MINISTRY OWNERSHIP

THE EXECUTION MYTH

If you look at your primary disciple-making ministries, who owns those ministries or groups? Most churches respond with the name of a staff member or a church department. Though it is important for the church to have staff that provide leadership to these ministry efforts, they must view themselves not as owners, but rather as activators; to lead with influence more than involvement. When a church remains the primary owner of every ministry, this is the Execution Myth at work.

When a church approaches its primary disciple-making ministries with the same mentality that it approaches weekend services, Sunday school classes, or volunteer teams, what happens is that it never transfers authority to the leader. The ministry remains “the church’s ministry that the people support,” and not “the people’s ministry that the church supports.” The result is that our people never lead the ministry as their own. They don’t feel like owner’s of the church’s mission, but tenants.

If the church doesn’t bust the Execution Myth, the staff is overwhelmed at trying to execute additional ministries while its people remain dependent on the church. The people expect the church to recruit and fill their group. They expect the church to provide the space for the ministry to meet. They don’t feel the freedom to use their discernment on how to best reach those in their group.

As long as the ministry stays owned by the church and not the individual, it will only provide a deeper assimilation ministry for the church, but it will never activate its people to make disciples where they live, work, and play. The church’s impact never multiplies because it never goes out into the everyday places of its people’s lives.

ASSESS:

In each box, rate each statement between 1-4 on how well it describes your church. See page 3 for details.

- The church has multiple categories beyond “ministry ownership,” for how their church provides leadership in the community and beyond.
- The church has disciple-making environments that their people would say is their personal ministry, not the church’s.
- The church provides an effective, relational evangelism plan that helps people start a personal ministry with people in their circle of influence.
- The church provides an effective, relational discipleship plan that helps people start a personal ministry with people in their circle of influence.
- The church celebrates and equips its people to create a custom plan for how they will make a kingdom impact in their circle of influence.

Total Score _____ /20

HOW DO WE BUST THIS MYTH? CREATE A PLAN THEY OWN

When it comes to leading relational disciple-making groups, the staff and congregation must shift primary ownership from the church to the individual. The church must **create a plan their people will own** by giving a helpful template like **Discipleship Groups** and coaching them to customize their ministry to best reach their circle of influence.

MYTH	Execution Myth
ASSUMPTION	Church Impact = Ministry Ownership
PRACTICE	The church rarely releases ministry ownership and customization to its people.
PROBLEM	Lack of authority transfer
OUTCOME	People without ownership
LEADERSHIP FEELING	Overwhelmed
CONGREGATION FEELING	Dependent
SOLUTION	Create A Plan They Own

MINISTRY MYTHS OVERVIEW

MYTH	ASSUMPTION	PRACTICE	PROBLEM	OUTCOME	LDShP. FEELING	CONG. FEELING.	SOLUTION
ENGAGEMENT MYTH	Activity = Transformation	Church success is driven by attendance-only metrics.	Lack of disciple-making vision	People without purpose	Dissatisfied	Apathetic	Push The Finish Line Back
EXPERTISE MYTH	Ministry Excellence = Excellent Ministry	Church relies predominately on staff for disciple-making and leading ministries.	Lack of leadership opportunity	People without responsibility	Exhausted	Comfortable	Become Hero Makers
EQUIPPING MYTH	Teaching = Training	The church's strategy includes minimum coaching environments.	Lack of leadership development	People without training	Frustrated	Defeated	Build A Training Center
EMPOWERMENT MYTH	Filling Spots = Empowering People	The church rarely helps people identify their uniqueness.	Lack of personal calling emphasis	People without self-awareness	Deceived	Burnt out	Empower Each One
EXECUTION MYTH	Church Impact = Ministry Ownership	The church rarely releases ministry ownership and customization to its people.	Lack of authority transfer	People without ownership	Overwhelmed	Dependent	Create A Plan They Own

TO BUST THE FIVE MYTHS THAT ARE STALLING YOUR DISCIPLE-MAKING MOVEMENT, YOU MUST:

PUSH THE FINISH LINE BACK BY BECOMING HERO MAKERS WHO BUILD A TRAINING CENTER

TO EMPOWER EACH ONE TO CREATE A PLAN THEY OWN.

SCORE

Now that you have assessed your church across all five myths, take your total scores for each one and place them below.

MYTH	SCORE
ENGAGEMENT MYTH	
EXPERTISE MYTH	
EQUIPPING MYTH	
EMPOWERMENT MYTH	
EXECUTION MYTH	
TOTAL <small>(out of 100)</small>	

PLAN

Now that you have learned, assessed, and scored your church on these five myths, what is your next step? Depending on how you scored, here is what we would suggest.

25 - 60: RED LIGHT

You may have the best intentions in what you are doing, but without knowing it, you have accepted some myths about church leadership and it has guided you to unintentionally make decisions that are stalling your disciple-making movement. Though you may be discouraged, know there is hope. We have been where you are and it is possible to lead the church that Christ and you have been dreaming about. It is time to re-evaluate how your church and your leadership are approaching ministry. You need more than a new strategy or tactic, you need a disciple-making vision. You need a vision that doesn't

just capture your people's hearts, but changes the way they view their life's purpose and church involvement.

60 - 75: YELLOW LIGHT

You need to take significant time as a team and identify where these myths are most impacting your church and discuss what changes would be most helpful. Evaluate your church's disciple-making movement on three levels: Vision (Why our church exists), Strategy (How we will accomplish our vision), and Tactics (The individual ministries that collectively form our strategy). Identify which level needs the most work and prioritize fixing these issues.

75 - 100: GREEN LIGHT

Great job! Keep leading your all-play, everyday disciple-making movement. Share this assessment with staff and lay leaders in your church and compare their scores to yours. Identify and discuss any significant differences in scoring and discern what the cause may be.

WHATEVER STEP YOUR TEAM DECIDES, WE WANT TO HELP.

See the next page for how you can set up a free call to talk more about where to start in activating your all-play, everyday disciple-making movement.



HOW WE CAN HELP

We lead churches through proven processes to help them activate their unique disciple-making movement.

We help your team get disciple-making clarity on three levels: Vision, Strategy, and Tactics. We bust these five myths and more through two dynamic toolkits created by Future Church Co. and Replicate. The process spans 6-12 months and includes monthly on-site visits and coach calls. Click below to schedule a free discovery call with our team to learn more about how we can help you get started.

[SCHEDULE A CALL](#)

REPLICATE MINISTRIES

Replicate provides customizable, multiplication-focused toolkits and resources that empower every church to activate an all-play, everyday disciple-making movement.

We are pastors who guide pastors through a biblically-based process that allows them to make Jesus' final words their church's first work: **Go into all the world and make disciples.**





YOUR DISCIPLE-MAKING MOVEMENT STARTS NOW.

CLICK BELOW TO DOWNLOAD A FREE GIFT TO GET STARTED

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REPLICATE