

## **FOUNDATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT VALUES**

### ***We will honor people as made in the image of God***

1. *We honor people's ability to choose, and we respect their development choices.*

Choice by coercion is a dishonoring of their right to choose from their hearts with conviction. We will distinguish between person and choice, between sinner and sin, so that we can better love our neighbor. Choice is what God honors when He calls them to repent and believe the Gospel.

2. *We honor people's understanding and experience.* We know that people live and work, choose and plan, grow and relate out of their particular understandings about life, creation, people, etc. Their own experiences will shape them sometimes in ways we find hard to understand. Yet, still, we will honor what is in them, knowing God began working in our own lives using our experiences and understanding. Development begins with who and what the people have, so we will honor their knowledge and experience.

3. *We honor people's culture and values.* Because people are made in God's image, we also know that there are wonderful things in their culture and values, things we can (and should) affirm and reinforce. Yet, in the midst of this is the sin factor, which corrupts and destroys. Knowing that sin has done its work, we will not agree with all that is in a culture or with all the values. But still, we will respect what is among them and those things which they will use to live and work.

4. *We honor people's abilities.* God has endowed each person and group with abilities. God will use these abilities to help them develop and grow. We will seek to affirm these abilities and help the people build on what they have toward God's good intentions. We know that new abilities will be built on previous ones, which will be employed to help them grow.

5. *In our relationships with people, we will strive to become more sensitive.* We will strive to become sensitive to how people choose to decide, sensitive to their unique understanding and experience, sensitive to their culture and values, and sensitive to their abilities. As our sensitivity grows, we will work with who, (and what), these people are. In our sensitivity, we will be building trusting relationships (friendships), through which we may be used to help them grow, and through which we ourselves will grow.

**We value God's plans and intentions for what people are to become in all of life and work (the goal of development). Development goals are initiated by God. We will strive to understand and pursue those goals.**

6. *In every category of life, and in every facet of society, we will seek and embrace God's intentions for the people striving to better understand and pursue His intentions.*

God has wonderful intentions for our lives individually, as families, as groups, as clans, as communities, as cultures, and as nations.

7. *Jesus Christ is God's goal for our growth:* We are to become conformed to His image (Romans 8:29); we are to grow up into every aspect of Christ Jesus (Ephesians 4:15), to be presented, to God, complete in Christ (Colossians 1:28). This covers every category of growth, maturity, character and wisdom.

8. *Jesus Christ is our model for growth.* Having grown up in the world, in a culture, Jesus became the perfect man. We desire to grow in manners like Him, (in balance-in wisdom, physically, spiritually and socially-Luke 2:52), in our cultures, in our environment and times, so that we can demonstrate God's good intentions and attain His intended quality of life. We will use our understanding, experience, wills and resources to strive in prayer and action to live and grow like Jesus.

9. *Because Jesus is our goal and model for growth, we will strive to live balanced lives pleasing to Him.* This will affect our care for our own lives and bodies, for our families and their needs for *balanced growth*, in our spouses, children, parents, and siblings, for our fellow workers, and for those we serve (SOSM students, communities, etc.). In seeking balance, we will consider the real needs that we encounter throughout our lives in the context of the categories of Luke 2:52.

This value will directly affect our work-style also, so that we will be able to continue to demonstrate God's intentions through our lives and our work together.

10. We believe God's *intentions for communities* are just as wonderful as for our own lives. Therefore, *God has already prepared plans for these communities (Jeremiah 29:11)* which, by His grace, they are able to understand and pursue.

These plans will affirm the people, their culture, their Godly values and their abilities and resources. God's development goals, initiated by Him, are of Him, by Him and for Him; but they will also be for the people, through the people and by the people (but not inherently of the people). People cannot create plans for themselves as wonderful as God has already prepared (I Corinthians 2:9), though they must surely be involved, heart and mind, in finding and pursuing them. God's plans for communities will be similar, in some respects, to His plans

for our lives. But they will also be unique in other respects, as He is a creative God. Therefore we will not be able to expound to communities all of God's intentions for them. They must discover these plans for themselves in relationship with God.

***We value Christ's methods and model for ministry in development and strive to emulate them.***

11. *Jesus is our model for ministry.* Jesus consistently applied appropriate service to individuals and groups, which either released or strengthened them to growth and maturity. To those needing mercy or relief He gave the right amount and the right kind. But He even went beyond that to strengthen their abilities to choose, act and grow. When challenge was needed, He gave it. To each one, the right gift was given, even gifts that might be seen as rebuke and judgment (I Thessalonians 5:14). Dependency, independence and interdependence were all directed to their right expressions and places in people's lives (Matthew 10:8, etc.).

**We strive to follow Jesus' example, knowing that we have only begun to understand how He ministered.**

12. *Jesus is our leader for ministry.* As Jesus was sent, so are we sent (John 17:18, John 20:21) by Him. He is our leader and we value His directives in order, initiative and authority. We will seek in prayer, and in daily obedience, the Holy Spirit's leading so that we can be ready to act in whatever realm or category He deems important.

13. *We affirm the local church as God's intended institution to demonstrate His Kingdom in a community.* Each local church is composed of people from their community to demonstrate His love to one another (John 15:17, etc), to their community, and to make known God's manifold wisdom to rulers and authorities (Ephesians 3:10). We will seek to work and serve local churches, so that they can more effectively fulfill this purpose; and by that, help their communities choose and pursue God's will (their development towards His intentions).

14. *Christ's word and wisdom leads us to mature thinking* (2 Timothy 1:7, 1 Corinthians 13:11, Romans 12:2, Ephesians 4:22-23, Colossians 2:3, James 3:13, I Corinthians 3:10, etc.). In using God's wisdom, we will utilize knowledge, skills, intercession, spiritual warfare and sensitive/loving communication, in concert, to remove barriers in people to pursue God's intentions. This will lead us to help others *develop mature thinking in culturally appropriate ways*. Through this, people, (including ourselves), will be better able to recognize problems and find ways to solve them (with God's help). And then, able to more effectively choose and pursue wise development values, goals, plans, and action. We will strive to understand how people learn and change, just as God made them. The

Scripture's wisdom and guidance will enable us, and others, to use cultural knowledge and perspectives in every category to grow into maturity.

15. *Our ministry, in its core, is a ministry of reconciliation--*through Christ's finished work on the cross--into all categories of relationships: with God, with one another, with ourselves, and with creation. We will value the importance of relationships in all categories. We will seek to find how God has provided the means of reconciliation through Christ for these relationships. Through this we/people will discover new heart attitudes, which will release understanding, knowledge, and freedom to build the right relationships, with God, with people, and with creation.

16. *We will pursue becoming effective facilitator-servants to help others develop towards God's intentions.* Being sent as Jesus was (John 20:21), we will find the *appropriate roles* that we will be walking in, in the relationships we have with the people we are called to serve. *Servanthood* is the core value and model for this. Therefore, we will not become lords or dominate people's agendas or goals, rather, we will help to make it easier for them to see, to understand, to repent, to believe (Mark 1:15), and to pursue all that God has planned for them – in terms and manner appropriate to their lives.

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