



Series: Vision 2021 (Part 2) - Sowing Anew

Speaker: Rhordan Wicks

## **INTRODUCTION**

All of us must have experienced something new and unfamiliar in our lives. Graduating from primary school to secondary school, changing to a new job or relocating to a new country. Stepping into something new can seem rather daunting. When God wants to take us deeper into the next things, he needs us to get rid of the familiar before we start anew. In embracing something new, we must be willing to accept the unfamiliar.

2020 has been a very disorienting time for us as we deal with change after change. As a church, we have to pivot quickly to the digital space. Last week, we shared that with so many changes happening in our lives, there is one thing that does not change - the mandate to make disciples. But what is required of us this season is to sow anew. Sow into new relationships, into a new way of doing things and into new ministries. The mission of making disciples has not changed, only the methods have changed. Let us continue to trust God in His leading and embrace new relationships and new ways.

## **DISCUSSION**

1. When was the last time you stepped into a new environment, i.e. new job/school, having a newborn, or perhaps relocate to a new country? What mindset did you adopt to start anew? What has helped you?
2. Read Genesis 1:28, Genesis 35:11-12 and Genesis 9:1. God's pattern throughout Scripture is to command His people to *reproduce* and then *rule* over the land that He gives them. How can you be part of this process of being fruitful and multiplying in our world today, besides having biological children?
3. To reap a harvest, sowing is necessary. What are some principles of sowing that you can gain from these verses?
  - 2 Corinthians 9:6-11
  - Galatians 6:7-10
  - Psalm 126:5-6
  - Hosea 10:12
4. Ps Rhordan shared about the *new things* we can sow into in this season.
  - a. Sowing into new relationships
  - b. Sowing into new ways of doing things in church e.g. the hybrid model of doing church - online and on-site (see Appendix A)
  - c. Sowing into new ministries

### **Reflect and ask yourself these questions:**

*How willing are you to sow anew?*

*What is hindering you from sowing anew?*

*What is the Holy Spirit saying to you in this season about sowing anew?*

## **WHAT WOULD YOU DO**

As we move forward, let us be mindful that God's purpose for us has not changed. We are to *be fruitful and multiply* (Gen 1:28). The primary fruit of one's life that is referred to here in this verse is having children. While this is the primary reference of fruitfulness in God's command as given in Genesis, it does not exclude other forms of fruitfulness. God's will is for our lives to bear good fruit in all areas (Gal 5:22-23). Consider, too, that

we can be spiritually fruitful and multiply when we obey God's commands to "*make disciples of all nations*". So let us sow into new relationships, sow new ways of doing things in order to be effective and sow into new grounds. Being fruitful and multiplying God's kingdom is part of man's purpose on earth, and allows us to share in His creation, His plan, and His glory.

### **MEMORY VERSE**

*"Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."* (Isaiah 43:18-19).

## APPENDIX A - Becoming an Omni-Channel Community

God is shifting us to a new normal. It is in this new normal, that we find these new mindset shifts that God is inviting us to:

- Moving from ministry that is focused on place to person
- Moving from large gatherings to small connections
- Moving from going through the motions to standing firm in faith

With the closure of on-site church services during circuit breaker, we had to pivot quickly to the digital space. The mission of leading people to become fully devoted followers of Christ has not changed, only the methods have changed. The vision of becoming an omni-channel community creates the opportunity to reach and disciple more people.

### What is an “Omni-Channel” Community?

“Omnichannel” represents the thinking that an organisation should align all of its channels so that an end user has a seamless experience across all. For example, companies like Starbucks or NTUC have an online presence and physical stores where you can order online or pop in at their stores to grab what you need. These companies have adopted “omni-channel” strategies to drive sales both online and at the physical stores. Omni-channel is an approach that provides seamless experience for people whether they are online, using an app or in a physical building.

***An omni-channel approach to church would mean that people could fully connect and fully engage with a church without the need to step inside a physical environment every week.***

They could attend one Sunday, watch a live stream the week after and schedule a video conference to meet their small group members to internalise the sermon they have just heard. Rather than a location-centric approach to church, this would be a people-centric approach that allows people to connect and engage with their church community both digitally and physically, for 1 hour on Sunday and throughout the other 167 hours of the week.

“If you apply “omnichannel” to a local church, you essentially decide it does not matter which channel the person you are serving utilizes to interact with your church or consume content from your church, and you want all the channels (such as your podcast, your live-stream, and your physical location) to offer a similar experience.” – *Omnichannel Church, Eric Geier*

We are seizing the opportunity to use the online space to reach more and disciple more people. Whether you like it or not, the world is changing rapidly. 5.2 billion people have smartphones today. What matters most is that people are hearing the gospel and transformed into the likeness of Christ. There are no longer lines drawn as we can flow freely from onsite to online and vice versa if we make use of the technology available to us, we can still make disciples.

This does not mean that we should no longer meet or relate in person. On the contrary, gatherings in small groups are vital for spiritual growth. We need a hybrid model. We still believe that live change happens best in small groups with a close-knitted community that holds us accountable. Jesus' method of disciple making is highly relational. As Jesus walked with his 12 disciples, we too need to have a band of brothers and sisters in Christ whom we journey with together. We have to balance learning online and relating in person. Both have to be done well. We must not desire the people in our church to merely consume religious goods and services, but to grow in community and to live on mission.

With the omni-channel approach, we can be watching a live stream church service together with a small group and have God-defining conversations challenging us to act on His Word. Imagine, engaging someone overseas and inviting them to join a watch party that you and your life group are arranging to participate in the online worship experience together.

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***“In a world where social distancing is the norm (for now), the church as community needs to go beyond the physical to embrace the real – those really hurting, those really isolated, those really in need. That will need sacrifice from all of us. It will mean some theological hoop-jumping for some of us. In the end the community of grace needs to be upheld and in this context, digital is a gift of God to make that happen.” – Why God's hybrid Church is still open for business by Dr Pete Phillips, Premier's Head of Digital Theology and a researcher at Durham University***