



RBC CONNECT GROUP STUDY NOTES 11/4/20

Part 1: Flourishing Spirituality at the Centre by Rev Daniel Bullock

The vision of the BUV Support Hub is to be a Union of flourishing churches with Christlike followers that redeems society. At last year's October Members' Dinner, I outlined the Flourishing Church Framework that our BUV Support Hub staff had developed which was to be a major focus during 2020, in our effort to support churches to flourish. The framework looks at 3 focus areas of church life - congregational life, congregational character and congregational mission. Within each focus area we have identified 4 aspects that may contribute to a flourishing church: 12 in total.

FLOURISHING CHURCH FRAMEWORK



Importantly, I hope you have noticed that at the core of our Flourishing Church Framework is the word *spirituality*. Our spirituality is intrinsically linked to our thriving as human beings and as communities of faith, a flourishing that is deeper than merely being successful.

The word spirituality has become increasingly common and is often spoken about in our society in a way that is detached from traditional religious beliefs. But when we talk about spirituality in the context of Christian faith and community, we are primarily referring to following the teachings of Jesus Christ and imitating his values and ways. We are referring to living under the influence of God's Spirit. Christian spirituality includes practices or rhythms such as worship, meditation, prayer, and solitude among others. Such practices help foster and shape our spirituality, influencing the pursuit of a life shaped by a sense of meaning, purpose, values and wholeness.

In Christian spirituality we find a constant call to open our lives to God in order to experience personal and communal transformation. In addition, our spirituality compels us to continue the mission of Jesus to transform the world and build or advance the Kingdom of God.

Growth in our Christian spirituality requires a deep connection with God through a restored and growing relationship through Jesus Christ. This connection is much more than a once-off event that occurs at conversion, but is a lifetime of abiding in Christ and journeying with God in our everyday. In that sense, to flourish in our spirituality we need to continuously open our lives up to be controlled by the Holy Spirit and in a sense practice spirituality (Eph 5:18; Gal 5:16).

Over the next 8 weeks, members of the BUV Support Hub Staff, along with contributors from Whitley College, will provide a weekly devotion and reflection questions based on practices/rhythms of spirituality that are intended to help you and your church flourish.

These devotions come to you with our hope that they will bless and enrich you. Can I also encourage you to share the series with your church leadership and community as we consider and reflect on how to flourish as the church of Jesus Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on Galatians 5:16 and Ephesians 5:18. What do you think it means to be continuously filled with the Spirit and to keep in step with the Spirit?
2. Often when I am seeking intimacy with God and in need of some contemplative time, I find a quiet place to sit in my garden or park, or I walk in nature. I find these contexts conducive to connecting with God. Do you have a special place or ritual that helps you connect to God? If not, can you think of a space that may help you in this?

3. Reflect on your daily, monthly and annual spiritual rhythms. Are these rhythms still serving you in relation to nurturing your intimacy with God? Or is there a need to adjust your rhythms?
4. What is the predominant nature of your prayer? Is it purely intercession or do you make time for silence, worship, and confession?
5. What is one obtainable spiritual rhythm/practice you believe God would like you to pursue for the remainder of the year?