**Week 6 – Ministry Time**

**Purpose:**
Here at the Vineyard, “ministry time” is often understood to describe the time after worship and teaching of the word where the gathered would wait on the Holy Spirit. It usually begins with an active prayer that invites the Holy Spirit in the midst of the worshipers. The worship leader often prays a “let your kingdom come” or “come Holy Spirit” prayer and then waits on God.

With the understanding of God’s Kingdom through Vineyard theology, how can we make space and time for the Holy Spirit to come in the midst of gathered worshipers? Whether it’s in a small group or a larger group, what are the ways we can intentionally make space for God to move in the gathering of His people?

**Objectives:**

* Consider how to facilitate ‘ministry times’ as we engage in worship gatherings whether in small or large group settings.

**Importance of Culture:**

Many churches and individual Christians believe that the ministry and gifts of the Holy Spirit are for today, yet it is surprising to see how few local churches make space in their services for the Holy Spirit to move and for the whole church to be involved in ministering to one another.

Life comes, and transformation happens when the Holy Spirit moves *(Genesis 2:7; Ezekiel 37:1-14; Acts 2:1-13; 10:44-46; Romans 8:14-17)*. To produce a local church culture that is open to the moving of the Holy Spirit we look for[[1]](#footnote-1),

1. The sense of family,
2. The level of expectancy,
3. The priority of worship.

**Helpful Insights:**

In addition, the following are helpful.

1. We need to give up control.
2. We need to be constantly asking God what he is doing and what he wants to do, in the meeting.
3. We need to make space, intentionally, in our meetings for the Holy Spirit to move.
4. When phenomena begin to take place, we need to explain as we go, in include those who might be feeling that they are on the outside of what is happening.
5. Once we have made space, we need to wait, and wait. When waiting for the Spirit what are we looking for?
* We are physically looking for the manifestation of the Spirit. Sometimes this is as simple as a sense of peace pervading the room or resting upon a person. Other times it might be tears, laughter, shaking etc.
* We are also looking with “spiritual eyes,” and in constant conversation with the Lord about what he might be doing. Is there something he is doing in one person that he might be doing in others? Is he doing something different in each person?

There is always an element of taking a risk in announcing this. We will never be 100% sure we have discerned what God is saying/doing, we “jump” and find out afterwards…

1. We need to form prayer teams, which are inclusive, not exclusive.

**Leading Ministry Time:**

1. When God is meeting certain people, we should turn our attention to the rest of the room. Ministry times should bring a room together, not divide.
2. We ask, what questions might those not encountering the Spirit have?
3. How can we be pastorally sensitive in the way we share what we think the Lord is doing?
4. How can we demystify and explain what is happening?
5. How can we build people’s confidence in praying for each other?
6. We must beware of two extremes. We can either try to make something happen or not make space at all.
7. If we are working in a church where this has never happened before, we start with scripture, then we deliberately make space for ministry on a regular basis and keep going.
8. In a small group context, tell people you are going to be doing this in advance, then you can’t back out!

**Discussion & Interaction:**

* Assuming you have been in meetings (large or small) where ministry time has occurred, recall your first reaction to it. Share stories.
* What is the culture of your local church or small group? Does it have a sense of family, expectancy, and worship?
* What can you learn from the insights and guidelines for leading a ministry time?
* Where do you need to adapt or grow?
* Let’s spend time in prayer inviting the Holy Spirit to come and minister.
1. Mike Pilavachi [↑](#footnote-ref-1)