

# Recognizing Our Times: Develop a Missional Ministry in a Changing World

Reframing the Context of our  
Mission

# Frame 1: The theological foundation for rural ministry.

- ▶ Affirming the relevance of the unchanging message.
  - ▶ The most important decision we make about change is determining what we cannot change.
  - ▶ The Failure of the Emergent Church.
  - ▶ The message is unchanging.
  - ▶ The message is the mission of the church.
  - ▶ The manner in which we communicate the message must be contextualized to a post-modern world.
- ▶ Affirming the relevance of the unchanging mission.
  - ▶ The church must be clear on its unchanging mission to advance the kingdom of God in the world by advancing the church.
- ▶ Discussion question: What are the foundations of the church that are changeable and how is the church being pressured to change?

## Frame 2: The changing rural culture: Living in the age of chaotic change.

- ▶ We live in the age of radical and transformative change.
- ▶ The rural community is the same as the rural community we grew up in.
- ▶ The changing rural demographic.
- ▶ The changing culture: from monoculturalism to multiculturalism.
- ▶ The changing Spiritual climate.
- ▶ The changing church.
- ▶ **Discussion Question: In what ways has the changing culture affected the church? In what ways is the rural church not prepared for these changes?**



# Frame 3: Responding to our changing culture?

- ▶ The Response of Fear: Becoming a Culture of Fear
  - ▶ Fear and fight: The Political Church: If we just get our nation to be Christian again.
  - ▶ Fear and flight: The Disengaged church: We flee from the world.
  - ▶ Fear and fawn: The Accommodating Church: We need to compromise
  - ▶ Fear and freeze: The tradition- driven church: “We just need to go back to doing how we used to do church.”
- ▶ The Response of Faith: Becoming a faith-driven ministry rather than a fear-driven ministry.
- ▶ **Discussion Question: In what ways does fear of our cultural decline hinder our missional focus?**

Frame 4:  
Shifting from  
homogeneous  
to multicultural  
reality:  
Recognizing  
and adapting  
our ministry and  
message to a  
changing world.

- ▶ “Urbanormativity”: Normal is defined by what is urban.
- ▶ Ministry that is relevant to our specific context.
  - ▶ Recognize ethnic multiculturalism
  - ▶ Recognize religious multiculturalism.

**Discussion question: How is rural ministry different from urban ministry, and in what ways is your local context unique? How do we then develop ministry that is specific to our setting?**