

# #SEE ALL THE PEOPLE

## ***Video Discussion Guide - “Let Me Show You Something”***

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*It happens in every church. It happens when the business of doing ministry becomes the ministry...It happens when our activities become more important than our own spiritual growth and development—become more important than engaging people who are currently outside the church. – REV. JUNIUS B. DOTSON, GENERAL SECRETARY OF DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES*

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Show the video found at [www.SeeAllThePeople.org](http://www.SeeAllThePeople.org).

### **Starters** (15 minutes)

**List five things that need to be fixed in your church:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**Discuss these questions in groups of two or three, and then share with the whole group:**

- How will these fixes influence the long-term health of your congregation?
- In the video, what was the difference between the way people were interacting inside the church versus how they were interacting in the coffee shop?
- What’s the difference between fixing the church and creating a different way of being in community with one another?

### **Changing the Culture is the Strategy** (20 minutes)

Congregational life can be exciting and hectic, and there are lots of balls in the air at the same time. As leaders juggle between the finance meeting, choir rehearsals, the new Bible study on Wednesday night, finding a new youth and children’s director, preparing for next week’s worship, the wedding on Saturday, and the funeral on Thursday, they may find it hard to know where to focus.

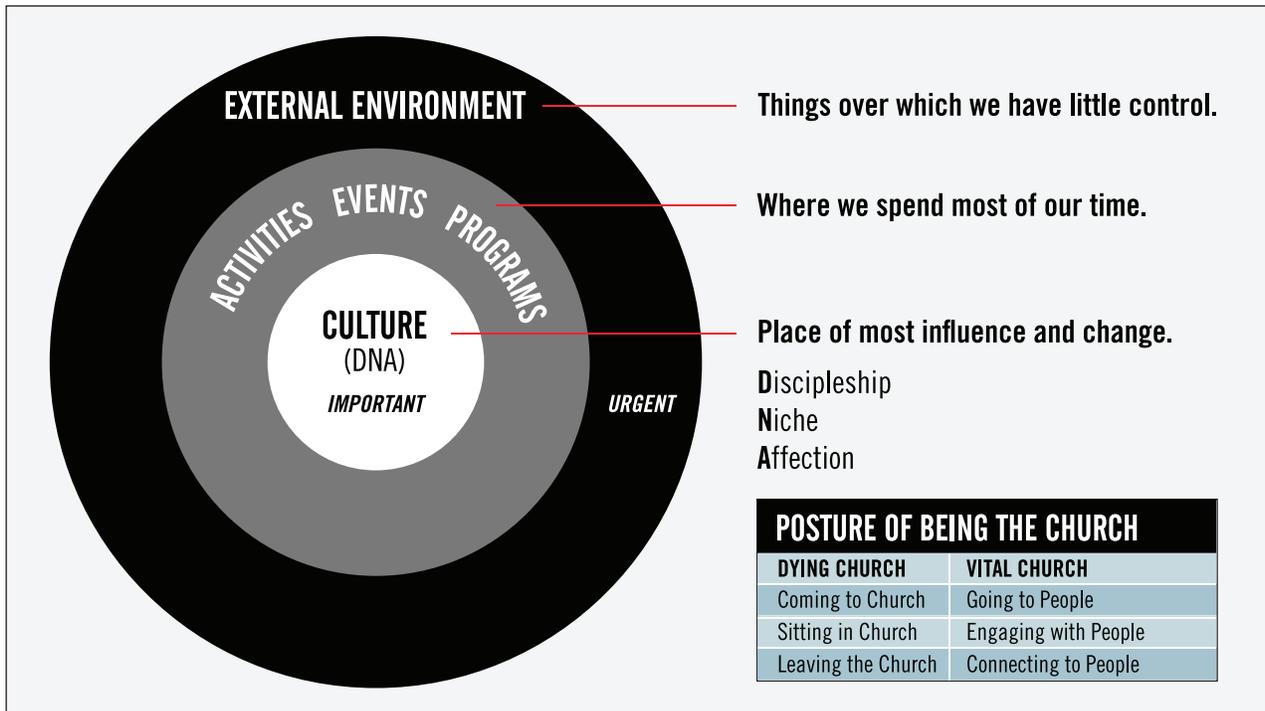
It is easy to get caught up in the events that surround us and to focus on things over which we have little control. Many times in our lives, we feel battered by the external environment, and we lose our focus. Political events, natural disasters, societal issues, denominational debates, and questions about conference structural change loom large. Although there is little in the short term that we can do about such issues, the urgency of the moment captures our time and energy.

Most of our time at church is spent on the activities, events, and programs that keep ministry going from week to week. While these are essential for connecting people to the daily work of ministry, if we focus our time on ministry only, then we will be unable to look to the future.

What is most important and central to congregational life is congregational culture. A focus on the culture circle keeps us connected to our “why.” When we are connected to our “why,” we add more power and impact to our activities, events, and programs. The opposite is also true: When we focus only on activities, events, and programs, we lose the connection to those things and the goal of helping to make disciples.

Culture is the **DNA** of the congregation. The way a church connects to people, welcomes them into the faith community, teaches them about Jesus Christ and the message of grace and salvation, invites them to pray and worship, and sends them into the community to engage in acts of compassion and justice defines the way it does **D**iscipleship. Its **N**iche is the way it positions itself in the community and connects to newcomers. Who the church loves, really loves, is its **A**ffection – the people who are welcomed and received through the ministries of the church.

Culture is also seen in the posture of being church, the way individuals live out their faith. In a dying church, the people are observers and are not invested in the church’s ministries. They come to church, sit at church, and leave the church ready to go on with the rest of the week’s activities until they come back again. In a vital church, people see ministry opportunities happening all through the week, inside and outside the church building. They go to people, engage with people, and connect with people as they develop life-changing relationships.



**Discuss this chart in groups of three or four, and then share with the whole group:**

- How does the urgent get in the way of the important?
- Why does investing in the culture circle give you the best long-term results?
- What is the difference between a dying church and a vital church?

# Reflection on the Bible (20 minutes)

Ask a member to read aloud the following passage from Matthew 22:34-40, NRSV.

Ask another person to read the background.

*When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."*

## Background:

After Palm Sunday, during which he turned over the tables in the Temple, Jesus returned and engaged in a debate with the Sadducees and Pharisees. After fielding a number of questions about his authority and his mission, he was asked to name which law from the Torah is the greatest. Jesus replied by tying together two powerful statements from the Old Testament. First he quoted Deuteronomy 6:5, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." Then he added from Leviticus 19:18, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus made the claim that the most powerful and enduring characteristic of the law is love. Furthermore, he stated that to truly love others, you must give your whole being to God.

## Questions for Discussion:

If your group has more than seven members, divide into groups of four to discuss the Scripture passage.

- Why is our love for God so closely tied to our love for others?
- How does loving yourself enable you to love others?
- How does Jesus' witness of confronting his enemies by calling on them to love speak to you today?

## Making It Personal:

In his video, *Culture Is the Strategy*, Junius B. Dotson points to two principles: **First, keep the end in mind.** The essence of leadership is knowing the direction in which you desire to travel and being able to influence the head, hands, and the hearts of others to follow you there. **Second, take a risk.** Experience something, and try new ways to engage your community immediately.

1. How does focusing on your church culture help you keep the end in mind?
2. How does your love for God give you a passion for sharing God's love for the world?

## Additional Resources:

- *Developing an Intentional Discipleship System: A Guide for Congregations* by Junius B. Dotson  
Free download at [www.SeeAllThePeople.org](http://www.SeeAllThePeople.org)
- *Disciples Making Disciples: A Guide for Covenant Discipleship Groups and Class Leaders* by Steven W. Manskar, *Everyday Disciples: Covenant Discipleship with Youth* by Chris Wilterdink, *Growing Everyday Disciples: Covenant Discipleship with Children* by Melanie C. Gordon, Susan Groseclose, Gayle Quay  
<http://bookstore.upperroom.org/Products/PDR1/covenant-discipleship-bundle.aspx>
- TeamWorks, a series of seminars for developing strong teams by Craig Kennet Miller  
[www.TeamWorksUMC.org](http://www.TeamWorksUMC.org)