What is Transformational Church?

People sometimes ask me about Transformational Church (TC), particularly after I mention it on Twitter as I did last week. I was talking about our **TC Brasil** project, as we are doing the TC research there.

So, here is a quick overview.

What:

Transformational Church and the TCAT (Transformational Church Assessment Tool) were designed to give churches tools to keep their focus on the biblical principles and guidelines for being the church while at the same time providing guidance on how to help them engage their culture and grow their church.

Transformational Church is a hopeful message:

1. Because it relates to churches regardless of size or location
2. It keeps the focus on the biblical expectations of the church without ignoring practical and contextual expressions
3. We are seeing local churches learning that they can as a body of believers discern God's direction and follow His leading in their local context.

When:

Our God is a transforming God. Anytime He is Lord of someone's heart and life, transformation occurs. The same is true for the local church. We have found that there are certain seasons of a church's life when they may be more open to seeking out God and allowing this transformation to begin and take hold.

Here are a few we have seen:

- Vision Casting-- pastors and leaders helping keep the focus of of the people reaching up and out rather than inward.
- Transition-- pastor and staff turnover; community demographics changing. Frankly, anytime the people sense that they are losing "control" is a great opportunity to give it back to God.
- Crisis-- when the pain of the status quo is too much.

Why:

If churches aren't seeing the transformation they want (or want to see it at a greater level), this tools helps them define reality and then press forward with a plan together. TC helps churches understand 1) what biblical churches focus on, and 2) where they can start.

How:

Real transformation isn't something that we can schedule, but it is something we can recognize. Church leaders can begin by leading their key leaders (staff and volunteer) through the Transformational Church book and leadership DVD. Taking the time to teach your people the biblical basis and matrix for thinking about being a transformational church.

Take the assessment. Find out where you are so you know where to begin. Every church has things she can celebrate and things she needs to work on. The TCAT isn't a pass/fail assessment but rather a tool to help clarify where a current church is, what can be celebrated, and where they can make improvements.

Use the book. The Transformational Church book is provided for churches and leaders to work through together-- evaluating where they are and where they need to go.

As I have written before, it is built on some incredibly simple and biblical ideas.

Incredibly Biblical Idea #1: Transformation. This is what happens when God gets hold of the life of an everyday person. He transforms them with the gospel. Every thought and action begins to change. Values and attitudes change. And people notice. They change from living for self to dying to self. Soon, life focuses solely on the mission of Christ.
Incredibly Biblical Idea #2: The Local Church. I believe in the church because of her Lord. It is the gathering of transformed people to hear the gospel, worship, and then scatter to participate in God's mission. The church is God's chosen instrument to spread the gospel. It is His people engaged in His mission to carry His message into their culture and every culture. The local church is not an antiquated idea but a necessity in our day.

And when these two words are combined using God's perspective on and involvement in them both, then you have something even more compelling. And that is what happened when we discovered the principles included in Transformational Church.

It is simple. What we're trying to do is help churches engage God's mission more faithfully to see the transformation of individual lives through the proclamation of the Gospel, the transformation of churches as they join God on mission and the transformation of communities so that the name and fame of Jesus might be more widely known.

For more information, go to www.transformationalchurch.com.