

AUTHENTICITY

IN A CULTURE OF MASKS

Leaders' Guide

A Financial Conversation for
Pastors and Lay Leaders

FOREWORD

This resource was initiated out of a belief that shame surrounding difficult financial circumstances and choices is an obstacle for many ministers to engage in the COMPASS Initiative programs. The programs require a certain amount of vulnerability and financial accountability that may feel prohibitive to pastors. Even though vulnerability and accountability may seem demanding, ministers will benefit from having open conversations and modeling authenticity. The event and resources offered here provide a way for pastors and churches to begin to create safe and authentic financial conversations.

“Authenticity in a Culture of Masks” is a collaborative project between The COMPASS Initiative and Nazarene Theological Seminary. It is our hope that you will find this resource helpful and a blessing as you provide an opportunity for ministers and local congregations to address unresolved guilt and shame concerning financial circumstances and choices within authentic dialogue. Truly authentic and missional churches are places where candid generosity and acceptance is available to everyone. We thank those who participated in the project and shared their expertise to create this resource.

Although this project was designed specifically for Church of the Nazarene ministers and congregations, we want it to be a beneficial resource for all ministers and churches. You will find references in the videos and written resources from a Wesleyan theological perspective; however, we believe the concepts are biblical and easily presented within any theological tradition. You are free to adjust the materials as needed for your theological tradition. The video presentations may be shown with a brief explanation of theological terminology, or an event presenter could preview the videos and present the content him/herself. We are very grateful for the opportunity to share this resource with our entire Church family.

Grace and Peace,

Dr. Stephen L. Borger
Director, COMPASS Initiative

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Authenticity in a Culture of Masks retreat is to create intentional space for ministers and their lay leaders to practice vulnerability and empathy with each other around the topic of personal finances in a safely directed way.

We believe that relational authenticity is a foundational principle for healthy churches, but authenticity requires vulnerability, and as broken people, we often avoid being vulnerable. Research has clearly shown that vulnerability, together with empathy, is absolutely essential to healthy and authentic relationships. Research also confirms that the only way to live wholeheartedly is to practice courageous vulnerability and empathy with others.

Unfortunately, this kind of wholehearted honesty is not always what we experience in the church. We learn from Scripture that Jesus Christ set us free and has given us “life to the full.” Yet, we are not sure how to move from our imperfect broken experiences into a life of fullness and freedom. Sometimes we try harder. Sometimes we give up. Often we feel a deep nagging discontent, a sense of failure, unworthiness, and even shame.

When these feelings take root in our hearts, we tend to construct masks that hide this inner turmoil from others. These masks give the impression to others that we are doing well, we are happy, and we are living life to the full. Of course, when we see the masks that others put on, we perceive them as the other person’s reality – not as a mask. This then fuels our own sense of shame and worthlessness as we compare our inner reality to the other person’s outer mask. Then in an effort to avoid exposing our pain and being seen as a fraud, we work all the harder to create a stronger and better mask for others to see. This can develop into a vicious cycle—one that ends in pain and isolation for everyone. This experience stands in stark contrast to the life of joy and fullness that Christ promised.

We believe that our Wesleyan-Holiness theology offers us solid ground for removing our masks, building authentic relationships, and reclaiming our identity as God’s beloved. As we accept the reality that we are deeply loved and valued by God, we begin to see others also as individuals deeply loved and valued by God. As we practice being authentic and appropriately vulnerable, we have the opportunity to walk with each other in the process of sanctification, where God transforms us through the power of his Holy Spirit.

This is not something for pastors to *teach* to the laity. This is something for pastors to *practice* with the laity. Pastors often feel pressure to be “more”: more holy, more loving, more devoted, more Christlike. Sometimes this pressure comes from the expectations of others, but most often, the pressure comes from within. We suspect that pastors are even more likely than laity to construct masks to protect themselves.

This brings us to the Authenticity in a Culture of Masks retreat. This retreat is designed to help pastors and lay leaders reclaim their identity as individuals deeply loved and valued by God, to give them practice in authentically sharing their real selves with each other, and to provide an opportunity to covenant together to practice this kind of living as they return to their churches.

We know that money and personal finances are taboo topics in our Western culture. Finances are very personal and very private, yet in the church, pastors and leaders must discuss finances in a group setting. They must handle the resources entrusted to them according to God's will and for God's purposes. It is a matter of personal discipleship and corporate stewardship. This is why we have chosen to use personal finances as the topic of discussion for this retreat. If pastors and lay leaders can learn to be vulnerable and authentic when it comes to money, and they can practice empathy in honest conversations about money, then most other topics will seem far less difficult.

Please use the following leaders' guide for planning and hosting your own Authenticity in a Culture of Masks retreat. We strongly suggest keeping the same content and flow, but there is great freedom for you to adjust the retreat to fit your situation. We provide a few suggestions for adaptations after the Session Content. You will also find all the materials needed for the retreat in the Appendix.

May God use this retreat as a turning point in the lives of the pastors and lay leaders who attend the retreat. May God continue to sanctify His people and the church and empower us to love as God loves.

Leaders' Guide to Session Content

Meals and Worship:

1. Eating meals together is significant. Begin the retreat by sharing a meal. Authentic relationships are the goal of this retreat, so begin with this ancient act of hospitality. Provide a relaxed atmosphere where everyone can eat around the table, share stories, and build friendships. Do not send participants out to find their own food at meal times. Take the time to plan ahead to provide communal meals. They do not have to be expensive or fancy. Simply provide sustenance for the retreat, so participants will have the opportunity to practice authenticity and nurture relationships.
2. Worshiping together is significant. Numerous resources are included in the appendix to assist you in creating worship opportunities throughout the retreat. The purpose of these times of worship goes beyond simply gathering people for the next session. Each time of worship is designed to give expression to the concepts that are presented and practiced in the surrounding sessions. It is a time to pause, reflect, and lift our hearts to the Lord. We encourage you to find someone particularly skilled in guiding people through times of worship to lead the worship throughout the retreat.

Session 1

Holiness as Social Holiness: Reclaiming our Nazarene Identity

Purpose:	Sessions 1 and 2 lay the theological foundation for the entire retreat. Session 1 addresses the issue of identity. Each individual is deeply loved and valued by God. Our individual worth is found in our belovedness – not in our abilities, talents, money, possessions, beauty, popularity, or the lack thereof.
Materials:	Manuscript, PowerPoint, and Video
Outline:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 15 minutes of worship- The necessity and centrality of love- Love, worth, and honor- The distortion of sin- Shame and identity- The restorative effect of love: Sanctification

Session 1 is the first part of the two part theological foundation that must be laid at the beginning of this retreat. This session is, as the name suggests, a reclamation of our Nazarene identity – a holy and sanctified people. However, this theological foundation undergirds the arc of the greater Christian Church and is not the sole property of the Church of the Nazarene. While the concepts of holy love and sanctification presented here are distinctly that of Wesleyan-Holiness, they are also theological concepts that most, if not all, of our Christian brothers and sisters worldwide would readily embrace within their own theological framework.

Our God of love seeks relationship with the people He created. He declared at creation that we are valuable. Our creator loves us, His love gives us identity, but sin and shame have distorted our identity and broken this relationship. God's love for humanity, demonstrated through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is the power to restore the *imago dei* in us, redeeming us from the grip of sin and shame and enabling us to live out our identity as God's beloved.

Sessions 1 and 2 are the result of the doctoral studies of Roland Hearn, a Nazarene pastor and district superintendent in Australia. A recording of his presentation of this material is available for use during this session or for distribution to participants to view as a pre-retreat assignment. Of course, inviting him to present it himself or having someone else present the material is also a possibility, depending upon the time, talent, and resources available to you in your setting.

Session 2

Church as Community: A Theology of Relationships

Purpose:	Sessions 1 and 2 lay the theological foundation for the entire retreat. Session 2 addresses the issue of relationships within the church and defines the church as a place of relational healing and restoration, out of which the Good News of Jesus Christ is proclaimed.
Materials:	Manuscript, PowerPoint, and Video
Outline:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 15 minutes of worship- Transformative love- Five marks of a healing community<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Trust2. Safety3. Vulnerability4. Belonging5. Affirmation- Shameless vs shame-free- Leading a healing community- Response of worship

Session 2 is the second part of the two-part theological foundation for the Authenticity in a Culture of Masks retreat. This builds on the foundation of love established in session 1 and explores a theology of church as a community of transformative love and healing relationships that is characterized by trust, safety, vulnerability, belonging, and affirmation; it culminates in a vision of the Church being led by love—not shame.

Sessions 1 and 2 are the result of the doctoral studies of Roland Hearn, a Nazarene pastor and district superintendent in Australia. A recording of his presentation of this material is available for use in this session or for distribution to participants to view as a pre-retreat assignment. Of course, inviting him for a presentation or having someone else present the material is also a possibility, depending upon the time, talent, and resources available to you in your setting.

It is vitally important for the retreat participants to have access to this teaching prior to the work they will do throughout the rest of the retreat. As we have stated, this is foundational.

Session 3

The Impact of Our Personal Narratives: Financial Timeline Exercise

Purpose:	Session 3 provides time for individuals to look back over their lives and examine their patterns of behavior concerning money and financial management. This is individual work with the financial timeline worksheet and an opportunity for journaling one's reflections.
Materials:	Financial Timeline Worksheet, Pens/Pencils
Outline:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 15 minutes of worship- Introduction to the Financial Timeline Exercise- Instructions- 30-45 minutes for individual reflection and work on the timeline

Money and personal finances are a taboo topic in our Western culture. Finances are very personal and very private, yet in the church, pastors and leaders must discuss finances in a group setting. They must handle the resources entrusted to them according to God's will and for God's purposes. It is a matter of personal discipleship and corporate stewardship.

We developed this retreat out of deep concern for the financial well-being of pastors. Although some manage and discuss finances easily, some struggle to make ends meet on a pastor's salary, some are uncomfortable talking about finances in the church, and some avoid teaching and preaching about money. We recognized the need for a tool to help pastors and church leaders speak more openly and honestly about money.

We also realized that the challenges in these conversations run much deeper than simple communication skills. Each person, pastor and laity alike, comes to these discussions with unique financial history, experiences, and perspectives. Our individual histories and experiences influence what we say and how we perceive others in financial conversations. While some people are aware of how this affects them, others have never considered the impact. Therefore, it is essential that we make space for this self-discovery.

We believe that if pastors and lay leaders can learn to empathize and be vulnerable and authentic during honest conversations about money, then they can practice these skills in other challenging areas, too, thereby cultivating a culture of authenticity within the church.

Session 4

Exploring the Impact: Financial Narrative Egg Exercise

Purpose:	Session 4 is another individual activity, further exploring one's financial past. This exercise has the participants draw pictures (no words) of their memories from their financial life story and begin to understand the impact of their financial wounds/experiences on their ministry and current behavior.
Materials:	Large Post It Notes (poster board size), markers
Outline:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Introduction to the Egg Exercise- Instructions- 60 minutes for individual reflection and work on the egg

Session 4 moves retreat participants from the rational left side of the brain into the emotional right side of the brain. Moving from the logical timeline of their financial history, participants will tap into the creative emotional aspects of their past through drawing pictures of significant financial experiences.

A variety of colored markers should be made available, along with blank easel-size sticky pads (approximately 25" x 30"). Be sure to provide each participant with enough space to work with the large paper. The sticky back will be helpful when sharing individual egg stories with each other, later in the retreat.

This task may be very challenging for some people. Remind them that it is not an art contest. The exercise will help tap into the creativity and emotions of the right brain and connect those emotions with the financial experiences. It may also bring up painful traumas from the past. Be aware of this and be ready to provide support if necessary.

When doing a shorter retreat, you will still need to allot the full 60 minutes for this exercise.

Session 5

Vulnerability & Blessing: Breakout Sessions for Clergy and Laity

Purpose:	Session 5 is designed for small group discussions that guide participants in questions about vulnerability, obstacles to vulnerability, and the role of empathy and honor/blessing. It should also challenge clergy to consider what vulnerability and honor might mean to laity, and vice versa (practicing an aspect of empathy called “perspective taking”).
Materials:	Discussion Questions on Vulnerability, Discussion Questions on Honor, Pens/Pencils
Outline:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Separate into two groups*; one clergy and one laity (separate rooms).- A staff leader in each group facilitates group discussion of the vulnerability and honor questions.- 30-60 minutes

This session is a facilitated group discussion based on the questions listed on the Vulnerability and Honor handouts. The questions for the two groups are very similar. We separate the clergy and the laity into two different groups so that clergy can discuss vulnerability without fear of what the laity might think; similarly, the laity can discuss honor without fear of what the clergy might think.

Although the end goal is to have clergy and laity able to discuss money together, we begin with limited vulnerability to give them practice in sharing vulnerably with those who most likely share their perspectives. It also gives them the opportunity to give and receive empathy as modeled by the facilitator. This exercise should move the participants from any feeling of being isolated into a safe community experience.

*If the overall number of participants is low, you may need to keep clergy and laity together. This will require an adept facilitator in encouraging honesty and maintaining a safe atmosphere. You might also consider challenging each group to consider how the other might answer certain questions. (e.g. Laity: What are the obstacles to vulnerability between a pastor and the people she/he serves? Clergy: What do you think it means to honor another person?)

Session 6

Group Exercises: Sharing Timelines and Egg Narratives

Purpose:	Session 6 provides a safe environment for people to practice vulnerability as they share their financial timelines and egg narratives. This is done in small groups (5-6 people), preferably all from the same church, including the pastor(s). The purpose is to facilitate vulnerability around money and to show pastors and laity that they are not alone in their financial struggles. This provides practice in discussing money with greater empathy for one another.
Materials:	Completed Financial Timelines, Completed Financial Narrative Eggs, Small Group Facilitator
Outline:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 15 minutes of worship- Introduction and instructions for sharing financial timelines and egg narratives- Break into small groups of 5-6 people in each (pastor with his/her lay leaders)- 20-30 minutes per person for sharing the stories depicted on their egg

Now that the retreat participants have engaged in some self-discovery and have begun to practice honesty and vulnerability, it is time to have pastors and their lay leaders in the same group. These small groups should have a maximum of six people in each to allow sufficient time for every member to share (at least 20 minutes).

The staff group leader will model how to share the egg stories by sharing his or her own story and pointing out some themes and patterns that emerged in the exercise. As participants share their individual egg stories, the leader will also model empathy, look for themes and patterns, and help them understand their own story and connect with the stories of the others.

The leader should ask curious questions such as "I wonder why ____ was important to you?" The leader should also point out similarities and help people see that they are not alone. The leader should help participants discover how their experiences have shaped their current perspectives and their current leadership/churchmanship.

In the process of sharing egg stories, each participant should hang the egg on the back of a chair or on the wall so everyone else in the group can see it. Even though this can be an uncomfortable experience for everyone, the leader should gently encourage honesty and model empathy.

Session 7

The Missional Connection: Authenticity and Mission

Purpose:	<p>Session 7 is designed to inspire individuals and churches to develop authentic relationships for healing and transformation into Christlikeness (sanctification for the sake of the lost).</p> <p>The Church is called to commit to the following four principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Grateful contentment as God's beloved2. A worldview of abundance, not scarcity3. Commitment to the common good4. Participation in an authentic community
Materials:	<p>Sample Manuscript for Session, PowerPoint, Brené Brown video clip on empathy</p>
Outline:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reflections on the group sharing process- Brené Brown video clip on empathy- Love and sanctification- Recognizing and removing the masks- Authenticity- Financial authenticity- Four principles for the missional church<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Contentment as God's beloved2. A worldview of abundance, not scarcity3. Commitment to the common good4. Participation in an authentic community

Session 7 takes the theological foundation, the self-discovery, and the experiences of vulnerability that the participants have engaged in so far and ties them all together with the mission of the church: To make Christlike disciples in the nations. Our transformation toward Christlikeness is done in community, a community that is honest and vulnerable, a community that practices empathy, a community that shares the love of God with others and guides them to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

People are inspired to put down their masks and create authentic missional communities of love and healing. They are challenged to adopt the following four principles in their lives and in their churches: 1) Contentment as God's beloved, 2) A worldview of abundance, not scarcity, 3) Commitment to the common good, and 4) Participation in an authentic community.

Session 8

Action Steps for Individual Churches: Breakout Session

Purpose:	Session 8 is a breakout session for individual churches to reflect on their current church culture and practices and to brainstorm their next steps toward greater authenticity as a church. Each church (lay leaders and pastor) would gather as a small group for discussion around the questions provided based on the four principles presented in session 7.
Materials:	Action Steps for Individual Churches discussion handout, pens/pencils
Outline:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Instructions- Break into church groups to discuss questions on the handout- 5 minutes on each principle- 10 minutes on practical steps moving forward

Once again, participants will break into church groups, for this final discussion on what the four principles from session 7 would look like in their church. Sample discussion questions are provided on the Action Steps for Individual Churches handout. A five-minute discussion on each principle will not be adequate to fully explore the topic; however, it should whet their appetites for further discussion after the retreat.

Encourage each group to spend at least 10 minutes on developing some simple first steps they can take toward deepening authentic relationships and fostering a culture of authenticity within their church. If time allows, create more room for these concluding discussions.

Session 9

Covenant Relationships

Purpose:	Session 9 guides the individuals from each church to prayerfully enter into an Authenticity Covenant with each other.
Materials:	Authenticity Covenant handout, pens/pencils
Outline:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Remaining in the church groups, give instructions for covenant- 15 minutes to read and pray- Close with 15 minutes of worship- Benediction

After the discussions of session 8, instructions should be given to all the groups to read through the Authenticity Covenant together, spend some time in prayer, and then sign the covenant as a church group.

This retreat is designed to end with prayerful, thoughtful, and practical take-aways that will assist the pastors and lay leaders in removing their masks and empower them to create authentic missional communities of love and healing.

Close the retreat with some form of worshipful response, such as singing, responsive reading, or communion.

Sample Retreat Schedules

Two-Day Retreat (Friday–Saturday)

Friday

9:00 am		Group building exercise
9:30 am	Worship	Pre-session 1 worship
9:45 am	Session 1	<i>Holiness as Social Holiness: Reclaiming our Nazarene Identity</i>
10:30 am	Break	
10:45 am	Worship	Pre-session 2 worship
11:00 am	Session 2	<i>Church as Community: A Theology of Relationships</i>
11:55 am	Worship	Post-session 2 worship
12:00 am	Lunch	
12:30 pm	Worship	Pre-session 3 worship
12:45 pm	Session 3	<i>The Impact of Our Personal Narratives: Financial Timeline Exercise</i>
1:45 pm	Break	
2:00 pm	Session 4	<i>Exploring the Impact: Financial Narrative Egg Exercise</i>
3:00 pm	Break	
3:15 pm	Session 5	<i>Vulnerability & Blessing: Breakout Sessions for Clergy and Laity</i>
4:15 pm		Group building exercise
5:30 pm	Dinner	
6:30-9:00 pm		Group activity (games, sports, mini-golf, anything to get people moving and having fun together)

Two-Day Retreat (Friday–Saturday)

Saturday

8:00 am	Breakfast	
8:30 am	Worship	Pre-session 6 worship
8:45 am	Session 6	Group Exercises: Sharing Timelines and Egg Narratives (optional: large group sharing) Informal 5-minute break at discretion of each group
10:45 am	Break	
11:00 am	Session 7	The Missional Connection: Authenticity and Mission
12:00 pm	Lunch	
12:30 pm	Worship	Pre-session 2 worship reprise
12:45 pm	Session 8	Action Steps for Individual Churches: Breakout Session
1:45 pm	Break	
2:00 pm		Planning & strategizing Breakouts: Churches
3:30 pm	Session 9	Covenant Relationships Review covenant, sign, pray together as church groups
4:00 pm	Worship	Post-session 9 worship
4:15 pm		Communion
4:30 pm	Dismissal	Commissioning benediction

Two-Day Retreat

Friday Evening – Saturday Afternoon

6:00 pm	Dinner	
7:00 pm	Worship	Pre-session 1 worship
7:10 pm	Session 1	<i>Holiness as Social Holiness: Reclaiming our Nazarene Identity</i>
8:00 pm	Break	
8:10 pm	Worship	Pre-session 2 worship
8:15 pm	Session 2	<i>Church as Community: A Theology of Relationships</i>
8:55 pm	Worship	Post-session 2 worship
9:00 pm	Dismissal	
8:30 am	Worship	Pre-session 3 worship
8:45 am	Session 3	<i>The Impact of Our Personal Narratives: Financial Timeline Exercise</i>
9:30 am	Break	
9:45 am	Session 4	<i>Exploring the Impact: Financial Narrative Egg Exercise</i>
10:50 am	Break	
11:00 am	Session 5	<i>Vulnerability & Blessing: Breakout Sessions for Clergy and Laity</i>
12:00 pm	Lunch	
12:45 pm	Worship	Pre-session 6 worship
1:00 pm	Session 6	<i>Group Exercises: Sharing Timelines and Egg Narratives (optional: large group sharing)</i> <i>Informal 5-minute break at discretion of each group</i>
3:30 pm	Break	
3:45 pm	Session 7	<i>The Missional Connection: Authenticity and Mission</i>
4:15 pm	Session 8	<i>Action Steps for Individual Churches: Breakout Session</i>
4:45 pm	Session 9	<i>Covenant Relationships</i> Review covenant, sign, pray together as church groups
5:15 pm	Worship	Post-session 9 worship
5:30 pm	Dismissal	Commissioning benediction

One-Day Retreat (12 hr)

Saturday

8:00 am	Breakfast	
9:00 am	Worship	Pre-session 1 worship
9:10 am	Session 1	<i>Holiness as Social Holiness: Reclaiming our Nazarene Identity</i>
10:00 am	Break	
10:10 am	Worship	Pre-session 2 worship
10:15 am	Session 2	<i>Church as Community: A Theology of Relationships</i>
10:55 am	Worship	Post-session 2 worship
11:00am	Worship	Pre-session 3 worship
11:15 am	Session 3	<i>The Impact of Our Personal Narratives: Financial Timeline Exercise</i>
12:15 pm	Lunch	
1:00 pm	Session 4	<i>Exploring the Impact: Financial Narrative Egg Exercise</i>
2:00 pm	Break	
2:10 pm	Session 5	<i>Vulnerability & Blessing: Breakout Sessions for Clergy and Laity</i>
3:10 pm	Break	
3:15 pm	Worship	Pre-session 6 worship
3:30 pm	Session 6	<i>Group Exercises: Sharing Timelines and Egg Narratives (optional: large group sharing)</i> <i>Informal 5-minute break at discretion of each group</i>
5:45 pm	Dinner	
6:30 pm	Session 7	<i>The Missional Connection: Authenticity and Mission</i>
7:00 pm	Session 8	<i>Action Steps for Individual Churches: Breakout Session</i>
7:30 pm	Session 9	<i>Covenant Relationships</i> Review covenant, sign, pray together as church groups
8:00 pm	Worship	Post-session 9 worship
8:15 pm	Dismissal	Commissioning benediction

One-Day Retreat (7 hr)

Saturday

Assignments to be completed before coming to the retreat:

1. Watch Session 1 video: *Holiness as Social Holiness: Reclaiming our Nazarene Identity*
2. Watch Session 2 Video: *Church as Community: A Theology of Relationships*
3. Complete the Financial Timeline Exercise (Session 3)

8:00 am	Breakfast	
8:15 am	Welcome	Introduction to the retreat
8:30 am	Worship	Pre-session 3 worship
8:45 am	Session 4	<i>Exploring the Impact: Financial Narrative Egg Exercise</i>
9:45 am	Session 5	<i>Vulnerability & Blessing: Breakout Sessions for Clergy and Laity</i>
10:30 am	Break	
10:45 am	Worship	Pre-session 6 worship
11:00am	Session 6	<i>Group Exercises: Sharing Timelines and Egg Narratives (optional: large group sharing)</i> <i>Informal 5-minute break at discretion of each group</i>
1:00 pm	Lunch	
1:30 pm	Worship	Pre-session 1 or 2 worship
1:45 pm	Session 7	<i>The Missional Connection: Authenticity and Mission</i>
2:15 pm	Session 8	<i>Action Steps for Individual Churches: Breakout Session</i>
2:45 pm	Session 9	<i>Covenant Relationships</i> Review covenant, sign, pray together as church groups
3:00 pm	Worship	Post-session 9 worship
3:15 pm	Dismissal	Commissioning benediction

Appendices

Appendix A: Printable Retreat Materials

[Holiness as Social Holiness Transcript](#)

[Church as Community Transcript](#)

[Financial Timeline](#)

[Financial Narrative Egg Instructions](#)

[Discussion Questions On Honor](#)

[Discussion Questions On Vulnerability](#)

[The Missional Connection Manuscript](#)

[Action Steps for Individual Churches](#)

[Authenticity Covenant](#)

[Worship Resources](#)

Digital Access to Retreat Materials

Documents, PowerPoint presentations, and videos

Digital materials will be available for download at COMPASSinitiative.org.



Holiness as Social Holiness

A transcript of Roland Hearn's presentation for the Authenticity in a Culture of Masks Retreat

This presentation comes from a retreat called, "Authenticity in a Culture of Masks," presented by the COMPASS Initiative. As we spend time together today, I think that most of the concepts you see here, you will probably identify as having some idea of already, but there might be a lot new today. As we put it all together, connecting the dots, we are hoping that you will see new ways of thinking about the struggle of life that we all deal with. This comes from over 30 years of my own personal ministry and a number of years of academic study. Putting the pieces together helped me deal with my own personal struggle, doubts, and fears that I have had all of my life. The interesting thing that I've discovered is that we all have the same things. As we look at this today, we are going to make the point that every issue that speaks to the life of the church must be centered on the primacy of love. By the time we finish today I believe you will affirm that this is true, if you don't already.

In this presentation, we will seek to address these issues: the transformational nature of love, the healing power of love, the nature of the community of love, and leading in love. Leaders are called to lead with love, not with authority and control. That's the point I am making in this presentation.

We get our theological understandings and sensitivities from John Wesley, and John Wesley centered his theological thought in love. In "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection," he wrote these words. These are old words and there is not a lot of flow in them, but I think you will get the point.

Another ground of these, and a thousand mistakes is, the not considering deeply that love is the highest gift of God-humble, gentle, patient love; that all visions, revelations, manifestations whatever, are little things compared to love; and that all the gifts above mentioned are either the same with or infinitely inferior to it... It were well you should be thoroughly sensible of this the heaven of heavens is love. There is nothing higher in religion – there is, in effect, nothing else; if you look for anything but more love, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way. And when you are asking others, 'Have you received this blessing or that blessing?' if you mean anything but more love, you mean wrong; you are leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it then in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of Corinthians. You can go no higher than this till you are carried into Abraham's bosom.

Even in that language, it makes the point, doesn't it. Love is the center of our faith and without centering on love, we miss something. Love is the essential expression of the nature of God: God is love. Discipleship is becoming like Christ – the process of transformation by God's love: becoming conformed to and transformed by that love. I like to relate it like this, we are brought into the kingdom of God by God's love. We journey on this journey of love and grace until we walk into glory, a glory of love. It is love at the beginning, love at the end, and love all the way along. We are not transformed by anything else. We are not transformed by our Bible studies. We are not transformed by information. We are not transformed by exercises. We are transformed by love.

Now, as we will see a little bit later, love is measured to us through a lot of those things, but it is love that does the transformation, and that love is the presence of God. The community of faith, the church, is the context in which that transformational process is lived out. Community is both product of, and essential to, that process. The reason the church exists is to love. It is the context of love that is the context of transformation. When we see the church in terms of programs or even in terms of achievements and goals, we misunderstand the nature of the church. The church is to create the community of love, therefore create the community of transformation.

Many years ago, when I was struggling with my own deep sense of worthlessness and hopelessness, as a pastor, waking up every day feeling like I was going to mess something up, I ended up having an emotional breakdown and ended up in the hospital. There in the hospital, I wrote these words, "God must be God and love must be enough." I came to that place in my life where I recognized that God alone could be God. I couldn't be God. And when I relate to God as God, I actually relate to him **as** God – not my genie, not my servant, not my wish fairy – but God – God the creator of the universe. God must be God, and love was my only vehicle to take this journey of life, to influence people, to direct people. As a pastor, I always thought that control was the way you got things done. You tell people, "You need to do this," "You need to do that." But the fact is, if I cannot move people through a place of love, whatever we might get to is, in fact, illegitimate. Love must be enough.

So, we need to understand love. One of the most important concepts that I ever wrestled with, and became convinced of – and if you get nothing else from this presentation, take this away with you – Love is worth. Love equals worth. If you love someone, you value them. If you value someone, you love them. You try speaking words of "de-valuing" into a person's life and then tell them you love them and see how much they believe you. In fact, we know that to be true ourselves, don't we? We've had people say that they love us and then treat us in ways that deny the validity of our lives, or take away from our sense of being. We feel controlled and manipulated, and it brings a question to our minds. Are we in fact loved by that person?

When we talk about worth, we are talking about honor. And in fact, when we read the Scriptures, we see many times this concept of blessing and honor resonating through Scriptures. It is talking about communicating worth. When you honor somebody, you value them. They are worth something to you. That is in fact an expression of love for them. To honor people is to give them dignity, freedom, affirmation, and recognition.

To live out of love is to reflect that worth. It is to honor individuals. It is to empower communities. When you love into a community you empower that community to become what it was intended to become, whether that be the church or the neighborhood. So when we think about the church impacting the neighborhoods in which we live, what we've got to think about how does the church empower the neighborhood to become that which it was intended to be?

By all means, we must resist control. This is counterintuitive to many, many people. If I want something done, I've got to tell people what they've got to do and I've got to control them in one way or another, or I've got to manipulate them. I've got to get this done. I can love them later, but I'm going to control them now because we've got stuff that needs to be done. Let me say this, you can either love people or you can control people. You can't do both at the same time. Finally, have confidence in the Holy Spirit and in others. We just trust that God is at work. That is interpreted then as having confidence in what he is doing in other people's lives.

How did we come to the place we are in, in the world today? Of course, in our Christian understanding, we see the Fall as the first step in the creation of this brokenness. Here are some images of brokenness. Sin dominated humanity's existence, as a result of the Fall. We cannot adequately frame the utter distortion of sin in our lives. This is really important for us to get ahold of. The way we see the world, the way we see others, the way we see our own life has been distorted as a result of that brokenness that comes from the Fall. Our perspectives, our understandings, our reactions, indeed our entire psyche is radically distorted by the power of sin. Even when we come to a place of faith, that distortion still remains in our minds. How do I know that to be true? We know that the Christian journey is a journey of becoming Christ like. If we are continually becoming Christ like, we must be becoming Christ like from something. Right? But what is the something we are coming from? Our distortions. Those distortions are distortions of our minds that result out of our brokenness.

We experience sin as "worth-lessness." When sin impacts my life, whether it is by me committing sin or having someone sin against me, the result of that sin in my own experience is worth-lessness. I feel worth less because of sin. It never adds to our value. It may be an experience of sin that temporarily adds some kind of emotional impact, but the long term impact is one of worth-lessness and that culminates in worthlessness. You and I all carry with us an awareness of what it is like to feel worthless. It is one of the common experiences of humanity. You will not find anyone, except those living in some level of pathological deceit, that does not struggle with the sense of worthlessness. The effect of sin is a scarring of our identity.

So how we see ourselves, the way that we know we are, has in fact been scarred by sin. We are our own. We are not God's. We are lost. Our identity, at its very core, is best understood as shaped by loss – loss of love, loss of worth, isolation, emptiness, and despair.

Are you excited yet? Such a reality is well expressed in the increasingly developing understanding of shame. About fifty years ago, psychological research began to navigate into this space of shame. Prior to that time, things we struggled with were captured under other emotional experiences. For about fifty years, change has been coming on the horizon. All of the research into shame speaks about the centrality of those concepts we just spoke about, in terms of the lostness in relationship with God.

Shame is identity. I am wrong. It's not that I've done wrong, but I am wrong. I am a failure. I am worthless. It's an identity statement. Shame is perception. I am not good enough. Shame is how I feel you feel about me. So I'm thinking what you think about me, and you think that I'm worthless. You don't, of course, but shame always says that these people think that I'm worthless. It impacts us in many, many different ways. Shame is relational. In relationship my worthlessness will be discovered, so I need to withdraw. One of the primary indicators of shame is that need to withdraw, that need to pull back. Shame pushes us away from relationship. In fact, I would go so far as to say that anyone who has experienced a broken relationship has experienced the impact of shame. Relationships break around shame. It's a sense of worthlessness, something you are doing is communicating to me that I am worthless. In my response, my defense to that communicates the same thing, from your perception, back to you, and our relationships begin to sever. Our relationships begin to fall apart.

These are the characteristics of shame, so we can better understand it. Shame is that sense of exposure. People are looking at me. They know who I am. They see me and I don't want to be seen. A second characteristic is the need to hide. Remember the account in Genesis of the Fall? The last part of chapter two in Genesis says, "They were naked and not ashamed." They had no shame. I thought, for years and years, that this meant they lived an idyllic existence. They were naked. They were beautiful. They had no reason to feel bad about themselves, and so it is just idyllic. But there is a much deeper reason that that phrase is in there. For the Hebrew reader, to be naked was to be in a state of shame. You can see that when David danced before the Lord naked, and his wife was so ashamed of him love stopped right there. Jesus crucified on the cross is naked, and that is a direct declaration that he is in a space of shame. So what did they do when they discovered they were naked and ashamed? They hid themselves, didn't they? That is the biblical record. They made clothes and hid themselves.

The next characteristic of shame is this, a perceived incongruence between expectations and achievements. A perceived incongruence between expectations and achievements – what does that mean? Simply it means that what you expect of me and what I am able to do has a gap between them. This functions in almost all, if not all, institutions. Institutions have institutional expectations. Our senses that I am not going to be able to fulfill those expectations creates a gap. Institutions work on shame. They see that it is a force to keep people moving towards the goals that are communicated.

Another characteristic is inappropriateness. I don't fit in. Have you ever had that feeling on the first day of school, or the first day of a new job, or the first day of coming into a new experience, or anything like that, where you walk into the situation and look around and think I don't belong here? In fact, I have that experience regularly. If I walk into a shopping mall, somehow I will convince myself that every single person in this mall knows exactly where they are going and exactly what they are doing, and I have no clue. I am just scrabbling around trying to find out, but I don't want them to know that I don't know, so I've got to find where that map is that will tell me where I need to go, otherwise they will see that I am worthless. That is actually shame at work right there.

Shame is a threat to trust. I think that if I get too close to you, you're going to do something that will hurt me or shame me. So I'm not sure I can trust you.

You need to act trustworthy before I can trust you, because if I trust you, you're going to hurt me. That is the shame reality.

The final characteristic of shame is the contempt of self. I hate myself. I hate myself. I just want to die. You've heard that, and you may have even thought that.

I want to make a connection here. For the idea of the sinful nature to have real meaning, it must capture the reality of the loss of our identity in God – and the reality that we are inadequately aware of that loss. Loss is our norm. Sinful nature is the theological construct and we link it with the Fall in the garden, but for that to have any real meaning it's got to reflect that sense of lostness in my life, and that I don't know that I'm lost. Out of that lostness I don't realize it. That can be directly correlated to our human experience of shame. I cannot make that point too strongly. What we describe as the sinful nature, this lostness, is adequately reflected in how we experience shame in our lives. That loss is as a result of an absence of an adequate relationship with God – a relationship designed to shape our identity in His image, which by its very nature is essentially relational love. Our sense of self (our self-image), the understanding we have of ourselves and our existence, is one that is shaped by lost relationship (sinful nature) rather than the One in whose image we were created.

That is shame!

We need healing, transformation, and wholeness. We don't need fixing. We don't need duty. We don't need obligation. The transformation of identity doesn't come naturally. We are, for all intents and purposes, who we believe we are. We may think certain thoughts, and somebody comes along and says, "That's not right. It's this way." And we can go, "Oh yah, I see that. That's right." When we are dealing with identity issues, we are dealing with the way that we see ourselves. We can't see ourselves in any other way than the way we see ourselves. So when we are talking about this identity of shame, this identity of loss, this sinful-nature-scarred identity, and we are talking about transformation, we need to recognize that is not going to come easy. It's going to be a long hard process, but it is something that we must engage in. It happens in two ways. There may be other minor things, but this, in my view, is the way our identity is transformed from that identity of shame. It happens in the presence of the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Holy Spirit fills our lives with love. That's our daily transformation. We believe it happens in a community of grace. We mitigate and marginalize the effectiveness of the Church when we think of the Church in terms of worship services and programs. Let's be honest, most of us think about Church that way most of the time. It's the routine we are in. Sometimes we just need to put a screeching halt to that and recognize those are expressions of things that the Church does, but the Church exists as the place for transformation.

This is very important. To have shame does NOT mean you have sinned. Just because you have shame in your life doesn't mean you have sinned. We may have all sinned as a response to our shame. So with shame being a part of our lives we have acted out of that space and we have sinned. Like the sinful nature, it is the reality we are born into. We are born into the place of shame. We are born into this brokenness. We are born into this lostness. Sin is best thought of not as activity but as broken relationship - the things that my life brings forth that causes broken relationship either to other people, to God, or to myself.

One of profound expressions of sin is the failure to become the person God has called me to become. He has designed me to be a being of love, and when I live short of that, that is sin. Recognizing that sin comes from my shame and that shame flows from that sin, we see this circle happening. But just because I'm sitting in a space of feeling lousy about myself, the solution to that isn't saying, "What sin did I commit?" That shame is about my being.

The solution to sin and an identity shaped by sin and shame is love. It's a ___ solution, isn't it? The solution is love. It is God's love administered to our lives through God's grace. Love is the answer. If shame and sin are the absence of love, then it makes sense that love is the response to shame and sin. The effect of love is the restoration of those things fundamental to the image of God in which we are made – all of which combine to fulfill the deepest need for relational love. Love is the only adequate response to sin. We might think punishment is what we need to do for sin, or control is what we need to do for sin, but that never works. It has never worked. Love goes to the root of sin and brings healing.

Let's think about this connection. As Wesleyans in the Church of the Nazarene, our classical understanding of entire sanctification, well understood as the heart filled with perfect love, is an adequate and total response to the sinful nature. It is therefore a response to the shame identity. Our identity is found in Christ and not in our distorted shame filled sense of self. At the core, we are transformed from darkness and shame to light and love. This is Galatians 2:20.

My ego identity [my distorted self] is crucified with Christ so that it is no longer my ego identity that lives but Christ that lives in me; the life which now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, [here is the part that we need to capture and take hold of] who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Love is the answer to ego identity. That he gave himself for me says exactly that he values me. He loved me and he expressed it in the worth of the reality of giving himself for me. It's a beautiful verse.

So let's make these links between sanctification and shame. We talk theologically about conversion being initial sanctification. It is the beginning of the process of becoming Christ like. It is the acceptance of love. So why do so many people have a somewhat euphoric experience at the point of conversion? It is because of the presence of God becoming real in their life, but it is being appropriated through this sense of acceptance of love. I am valued. I am accepted. Yes, this incredible praise begins to flow from our life because we have discovered the truth. I am loved. I am accepted, which is a value statement.

Entire sanctification is actually the transformation of the core of our identity. In days gone by, we used to preach often about this idea of laying down things. I lay down my past, my future, my hopes, my fears, my job, my family, my pains. Whatever it may be, I lay it at the feet of Jesus. Theologically we call that consecration, but if you think about all those things that we labeled, those are all identity formers. So what we are actually saying in the act of consecration is, "I lay down all of my identity formers at your feet, Jesus, and I ask that you be the one who forms my identity, that you would fill my heart with your love. That's entire sanctification, and that's actually understandable. That is actually accessible.

Sometimes, I myself, processing this theologically for years, couldn't quite get my head around what was actually going on. It's an act of faith so you just do it because the preacher says I've got to. So you approach God for this experience of entire sanctification. But what is actually happening is that I lay down my identity and allow his identity to become mine, and that is transformation. That's why we say our hearts are filled with love, because they are filled with his presence.

Then we have this concept of progressive sanctification that we've always believed in but haven't understood exactly what is happening. Progressive sanctification is the transformation of my psyche because my identity has been transformed. We are actually going to struggle with shame for all of our lives. There are these processes going on in our minds that have been shaped by shame. But now when shame arises, our identity says, "That's not true of who you are," so we are able to submit that shame to that identity, and win one more battle. That is progressive sanctification. That goes on throughout our entire lives.

Church as Community

A transcript of Roland Hearn's presentation at the Authenticity in a Culture of Masks Retreat

Welcome back. We are going to move into this really essential topic of understanding the Church as community and the transformational power of love. It is absolutely essential that we unpack that idea that we spoke about in the last session. It is in the Church that this transformation takes place.

The receiving of divine love continually makes us more like Christ. As I open my heart to the love of God, he is continually shaping me into his image and making me more like Christ. It is the very defenses that we have created across our lives to the thought of our shame-shaped identity being discovered that resist love. You see that when you try to relate to somebody and they throw up walls, or they just act out of their defense mechanisms. Those defense mechanisms are designed to hide their shame, but it is those mechanisms that are blocking the transformational power of love. So we need to bring those defense mechanisms down.

Discipleship is creating a context in which we can help one another receive love. When we think about discipleship, it is much more than simply learning stuff about Jesus. It is actually creating a context where we help each other lower our defense mechanisms, so that love can do its transformational work.

Love can be received in many ways, and it is our responsibility as a church community to multiply those ways. Wesley's concept of the "means of grace" provide many such ways. To act in love toward each other creates the context of grace. It is vital that we remember that God has already begun the process through God's prevenient grace. When we are speaking with somebody that has not come to that step of faith, we need to understand that God's prevenient grace is already working in them. It is already drawing them into the place of love. At the very, very least level, they have a desire to be loved, even if they believe it is impossible. That's prevenient grace.

Just thinking about Wesley's means of grace, sometime go and google "means of grace" and see what comes up there. There are lots and lots of actual practical things that we can do to make space for grace in our lives and in the lives of others.

As love transforms us, our need to protect our fearful hearts is reduced; we willingly give ourselves over to our identity in Christ. Our defense mechanisms, designed to protect that which is feared as unacceptable, collapse before the force of love. We live lives that are not self-protecting because our self is in Him. We are therefore more able to give ourselves to valuing love – love that others experience as worth.

Our communities of grace become healing communities as the defenseless (love-filled followers of Jesus Christ) gather for His glory. Our sacred task is to create communities of worth where the power of love can transform each other in an environment of openness.

The five marks of a healing community are the keys to wholeness. These five marks are what you will find in a church that is moving people to a place of transforming love. The five things are trust, safety, vulnerability, belonging, and affirmation.

Let's unpack that a little bit. First of all, let's look at trust. Trust requires an unshakeable commitment to honest struggle. The creation of trust is not about perfect performance but about transparent process. Trust exists not in our confidence that another will not hurt us, but in the person as God sees their worth and potential. We choose to trust people, not because they will never hurt us, but because we see them as God sees them, and we open a way for them to find more love. When we trust each other in the Church, it is not that we trust each other to be performers, what we are trying to have is an open process where we are open and vulnerable with each other, so we can see each other's struggle. That's what creates trust.

This of course is 1 Corinthians 13:7:

[Love] always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (NIV)

...bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (NASB)

Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. (JB Phillips New Testament)

These are fantastic words in the context of trust because it is so easy for us – remember what we said about the characteristics of shame, that it is a threat to trust – it is so easy for us, out of our place of shame, to not trust. But 1 Corinthians 13 says, “Love always trusts.” That's a radical statement and we can work really hard to try and make that mean something other than what it does say, because we don't like it. But it is shame that tells us not to like it, because if we trust people and they hurt us, where it hurts is at our own sense of worthlessness. If indeed our identity is found in Christ, then being hurt is a transitory experience because we can find our way back to Christ.

Therefore, trust becomes something that we give people even when there is not necessarily an expectation of trust. We have to think that through. What we need to be able to communicate to people is, “I fundamentally trust you, even if your performance doesn't necessarily warrant trust, or it isn't trustworthy.”

The second thing is safety. A safe environment involves a commitment to providing a space where one will not be intentionally hurt or shamed. It is an empathetic environment. It is not one in which there is no possibility of being hurt but one where pain is understood and shared. Hurt that may occur comes as a result of the frailty of our humanity and is an expression of shame – it is dealt with honestly and apologetically. To apologize is to express empathy. An inability to apologize is an expression of shame and undermines safety.

You know that the best thing you can do to create a place of safety is to be willing to apologize. Somehow we struggle with this. In fact, I was in a board meeting a couple of months ago and one of the board members said, “I have been a Christian for X number of years, and I never apologize because I've never done anything wrong.”

I immediately knew that person had to step down from the board because that is just not true. The incapacity to apologize meant that the shame walls were so thick in their life they couldn't possibly be a leader in the church.

It is such a great gift to people to say, "I'm sorry." Have you ever seen how in a conflict, the conflict is going on – bang, bang, bang, bang – and then one person says, "You know what? I'm sorry." The conflict just dies. It falls apart. When we say, "I'm sorry," we are saying, "I acknowledge your pain." Rather than saying, "I'm trying to protect my pain," we are saying, "I acknowledge your pain, and I wouldn't want it to be that way." That is an expression of love. It's incredible to me how quickly "I'm sorry" finishes a conflict. That's what creates a safe place in the church.

Thirdly, vulnerability – The most terrifying attribute of the healing community is that it is a place of vulnerability. It is a place where those engaged in the ministry of healing are the ones who live unguarded lives. There must be a willingness to live at the place where we can be hurt if there is going to be true healing. Vulnerability is something that scares us all. Vulnerability is me opening up my life so you can see my struggle. The reason it is so hard is because shame convinces us that if people can see my struggle they won't love me, they won't like me, they will disconnect, they will judge me, all of those things. In fact, that often does happen. At least the judgement part happens. But vulnerability is based on our identity in Christ, not on our identity in shame. We are set free from that place so we create this space of vulnerability. It becomes this incredibly powerful way of bringing transformation into the life of the church.

If you go back and look at the Day of Pentecost, you see the Holy Spirit come. Preceding the Day of Pentecost, there are fifty days where the people of God gathered in the upper room. I am going to suggest that as those people gathered during that time, they had been through this incredibly traumatic experience where they had lost the one who had meant everything to them, and they received him back again. That put them on an emotional rollercoaster. Typically, when people have been through those kinds of extremes, they do become vulnerable. They start to talk about their struggle. I would suggest in that fifty day period, those people became incredibly vulnerable to each other, because of the experiences they had been through. They talked about their doubts and their fears and failures. While I cannot guarantee it is true, I like to think that what made it possible for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on the Day of Pentecost, it was actually the vulnerability that made it happen in that upper room.

While we maintain the ever-present possibility, and reality, of being entirely sanctified, it is in the context of being constantly sanctified, transformed, and healed. That means that while I am being transformed, there is more to come. The vulnerability is going to be about the process and will include my failures.

Next is belonging. We must offer the gift of belonging before we can offer the grace of transformation. We cannot point to people's inadequacies and suggest some type of transformation is needed prior to acceptance. Acceptance comes first. To belong is the beginning of honor. One of the most valuing things you can do for people is to say to them, "You belong here." The church needs to be a place of embrace. When a person comes into the life of the church, it is actually a gift. They are giving us their journey. For us to stand back and judge, based on them not adequately fitting our parameters is a terrible betrayal of the Gospel.

So we create a space where people belong, even when their lifestyles are dramatically opposed to what we might value. Transformation comes after belonging, and if we want it to come before, we can never expect God to be able to use us in the process of bringing love and Christ to their life. This is Peter's statement, "...for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." (1 Peter 2:10) You belong.

Finally, affirmation. The rhetoric of the healing community is of one another's worth. Every opportunity to point to the reality of worth must be taken if we are to be a healing community. We affirm by listening. We listen to people. We don't keep talking. We listen. We affirm by acknowledging both struggle and success. It's often easy to say, "Oh, you've done a great job. That's great!" It may be affirming in that way, but it is equally affirming to listen to a person's struggle and to empathize with them in their struggle.

We affirm by allowing free choice. We let people come, and we let people go. As a pastor, that is something I had to deal with greatly. I always wanted people to be in church every Sunday, and I would have a way of talking to people when they didn't turn up, to let them know that I wasn't happy with them. God saved me. I got converted. I realized that I didn't have to control people's church attendance. In fact, I got to the place where I realized that people coming to church out of duty wasn't a helpful thing. I have to confess, I have actually met people at the church door and said, "You know, it's been three months since you've missed a Sunday. Why don't you not come next Sunday?" I encouraged them to think about getting out of just doing it out of duty, and do it out of love and grace. Obviously, I knew some more about what was going on in the background there, but church attendance can't be the measure of our Christian experience, right? When I attend church because it's just what I do, I'm not adding to the healing community. I attend the church community because I long to be a part of that. I love being a part of it. It's the thrill of my life to be a part of that. That's the motivation.

We affirm through ministry being an expression of giftedness not institutional requirements. I can say a lot about this, but I will try and keep it brief. Letting people do things that they are gifted to do is affirming. Making people do things that they don't want to do is not affirming. We affirm by recognizing personality differences and experiential predispositions. I've been around Christians long enough to know that some Christians think all Christians ought to be this way. They ought to look this way. They ought to dress this way. They should vote this way. They should go to these places. They ought to say these things. They ought to...whatever it is. But we affirm by allowing variety, allowing difference, and affirming those differences. We affirm by highlighting in our conversations with each other what we value and love about the other.

Now, often times in this conversation, we talk about trying to create shame-free spaces and shame-free churches. I have often had people say, "Well, there is a good process to shame. Shame is the barrier that surrounds us and keeps us inside the law. We know if we cross the boundaries of the law, we will feel bad about ourselves." A shameless person is a person that isn't held back by those boundaries, so we don't want people to be shameless. I make a distinction between being shameless and shame-free. In the first place, shame does create boundaries around which people don't want to cross, but let me suggest that whatever effective boundaries shame can create, love can create a much better one. While shame does create a boundary, if love was the boundary, we wouldn't need shame at all.

Let me try to flesh out these differences between being shameless and shame-free. To be shameless is to create a defense mechanism against personal shame that is impervious to any form of challenge. It is a pathological condition. To be shame-free is to discover our identity in Christ, have our memories healed of their sting, and to be daily transformed from the habitual psychological patterns of shame. To be shameless is to have no restraint on inflicting pain upon another. Shame is often seen to have a positive guiding and controlling impact upon a community, and to be shameless is to live without regard to those restraints. To be shame-free is to be guided by love as our restraint rather than shame.

These things come together to create what, for me, is a vision of the future. In order to see where the church can be, we must see it for what it is intended to be. No vision for the church can be truly complete if it does not include bringing healing from shame and hope for a shame-free community. Any vision of the future must reflect the reality of truly transformed lives united together by a God-given passion to bring that same transformation to those that have not received. To make that transformation available to the shamed is to create shame-free communities that understand the imperative of the five keys.

Many pastors and church leaders are dominated by the thought of being a model Christian, having a model home, living a model fiscally responsible life, modeling competency. That's a burden that many pastors and church leaders carry. I'm a church leader. I've got to model what it is to be complete in Christ. But to be a model pastor or church leader is to model the five marks of healing. It is not to be competently above every struggle. To be an effective pastor or leader is to lead with love. We cannot afford our leadership to be marked by shame.

So what we actually model is the transformational process of love. That's what leaders model – not competency, but in their vulnerability - displaying what love is transforming them into. I wonder what would happen in the life of the church if that was the task we took to heart; if as leaders we would say, "I don't need to uphold the standard of perfection and performance. What I need is for people to see that in my humanity, God is faithfully bringing transformation."

I am a different person from what I was ten, fifteen years ago - even five years ago. I like myself. I like the way God has shaped me, but that has not been my reality for most of my life. I know how awful a human being I am apart from the grace of God, very controlling, very manipulative, very demanding that I am right, very on top of things. As a pastor, I always wanted to make sure the right thing happened all the time, because if it went wrong, it reflected badly on me. As God began to transform me through love, what I have increasingly found is that I don't need to control anything. The results are so much more God glorifying when I take my hands off and people arrive at that place of love and grace on their own than it is when I control them to get them there. It's an amazing wonderful thing.

Phineas Bresee, the founder of the Church of the Nazarene, said, "We are debtors to every man," and of course every woman. This was written over 120 years ago. "To give him the gospel in the same measure in which we have received it." So let's throw our hearts open. Let's live vulnerably and allow grace to transform us from a controlling shame identity to the identity of glory and grace. Then give others that grace in the measure that we have received.



AUTHENTICITY

IN A CULTURE OF MASKS

Financial Timeline

Any struggle with financial management is simply the current chapter of a narrative that began much earlier in your life. It is important to better understand the big picture when increasing fiscal responsibility. The idea here is to leave no stone unturned as you think about your spending/saving behaviors, both in the past and in the present. While it may not seem like there is a connection between previous experiences in your life and your current moment, there is often a pattern of behavior that begins to emerge or a gaining of perspective with regard to the function of the behavior over time. Do your best to complete the information below; be sure to check items that applied in childhood and other earlier periods of your life, as well as those that apply in the present day.

My earliest memory involving money is: _____

This occurred around age _____.

The story of my formal financial education process includes: _____

My first experience of managing finances was: _____

This occurred around age _____.

I have lived in poverty for extended times in my life (circle one): Yes No Unsure

I have been homeless at times in my life (circle one): Yes No Unsure

Check the following behaviors that apply to you since age 18 (if not applicable, leave blank):

<input type="checkbox"/> Impulsive spending	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Hoarding money	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> High debt/card balances	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Bankruptcy/foreclosure	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Use a budget	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current

AUTHENTICITY

IN A CULTURE OF MASKS

<input type="checkbox"/> Fight about money	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan for retirement	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Obsess about money	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Pay church budgets fully	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Borrow money	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Take out a payday loan	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Hide money problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Feel money shame	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Track my spending	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Overdraft an account	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed/lost job	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Gambling behaviors	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Past (last date _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Current

Reflections

Spend a moment reflecting on these experiences and begin to jot down your thoughts about how your money story has impacted your life. What do you want to be different in how you operate financially? How does your money story shape your theology? Is there a discrepancy between what you believe and how you live your life? What memories about money popped into your head as you completed this exercise? Be sure to write them down.

[illegible]



AUTHENTICITY

IN A CULTURE OF MASKS

Financial Narrative Egg Instructions

Start by drawing a large oval or “egg” on the large piece of paper provided to you, similar to the example on the next page.

Next, fill the egg with boxes that are large enough for you to draw a small picture in. You will be filling the egg with memories about your financial life story, drawing a simple picture to represent each memory. For example, if I was going to discuss the time when my uncle gave me a \$100 bill at age 10, and five minutes later took it back and said, “Sorry, I gave you the wrong one” as he handed me a \$1 bill, I might draw a \$100 bill in one of the spaces. One wound that could show up from this moment is the belief that I am unworthy of good things, and the beginning of a fear that God will take away good things.

Through this lens, we see that an early money wound can have a direct impact on one’s theology, and even more so when these financial narratives have not been explored. Working from the bottom to the top, start with your earliest memories of finances.

Some examples might include not having money for groceries, growing up in poverty, family bankruptcy, losing a home, etc. You will work through your life youngest to oldest, bottom to top, with more recent life experiences in the top spaces, and your memories from childhood in the lower spaces.

As you fill in each cell of your egg, be sure to number the cell and write down a brief description on a separate sheet of paper.

Outside of the egg, you will write “money rules” in the upper left-hand corner, and briefly describe all of the rules you currently live by (good, bad, or ugly). In the upper right-hand corner, you will write “money wounds” and identify the primary ways you have been negatively impacted by your financial story. Try to identify 4-5 for each.

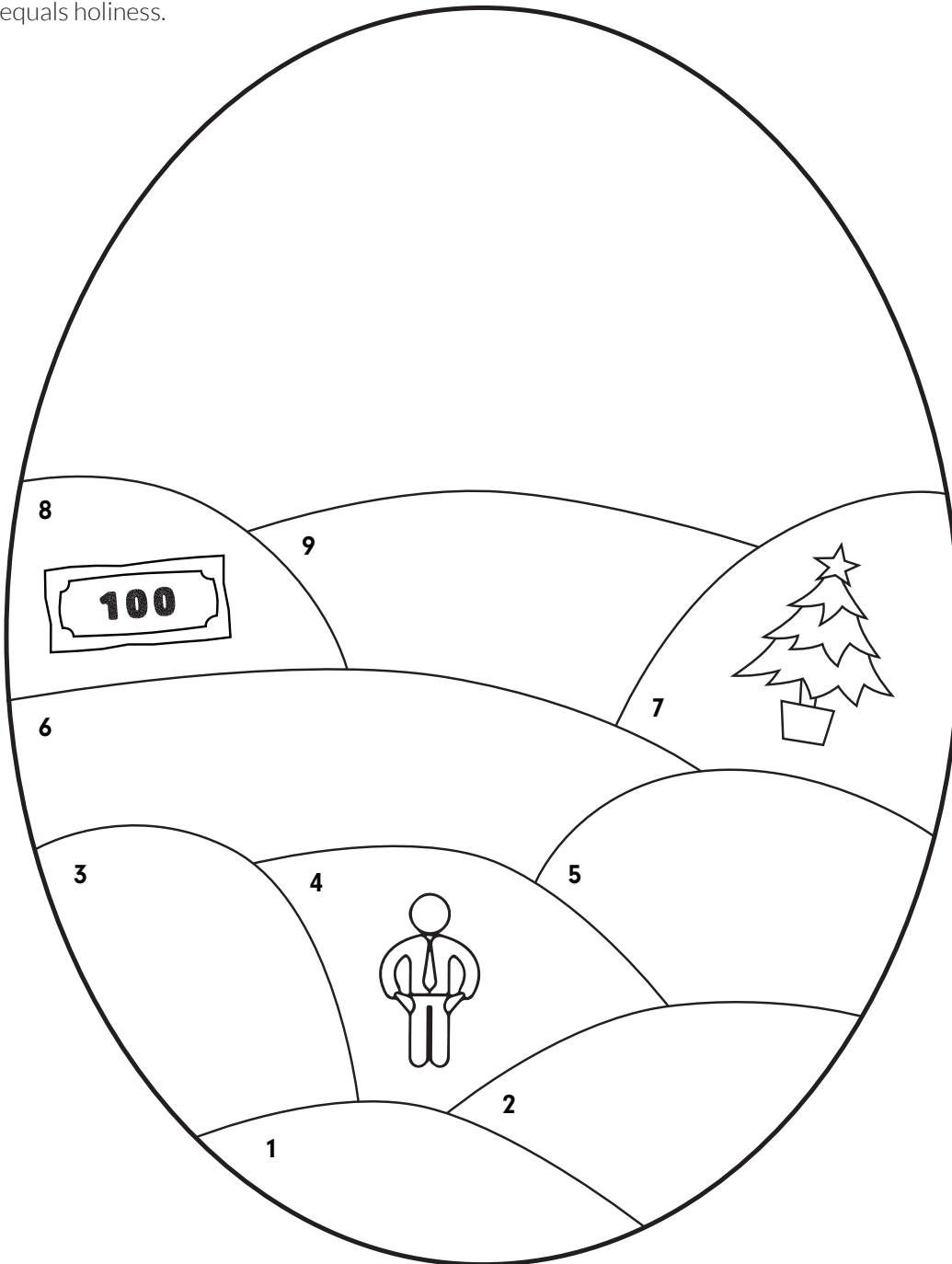
Example

Money Rules

1. Don't ask for anything, it stresses mom and dad out.
2. Money matters should be kept private and never discussed.
3. Poverty equals holiness.

Money Wounds

1. I felt a lot of shame as a child about my family's financial issues.
2. I feel like I am not worthy of good things because they always get taken away.





AUTHENTICITY

IN A CULTURE OF MASKS

Vulnerability and Honor

Laity: Honor Discussion

- Tell a story from your past where you felt really good about yourself.
- Remember a time when you felt worthless, incompetent, or exposed. Why did you feel this way?
- Do you think your pastor ever feels inadequate based on the expectations of the congregation? Why or why not?
- The pastors are answering questions about vulnerability, among which are the following three questions. How do you think they are answering them?
 - Why is vulnerability so difficult?
 - What are the obstacles to vulnerability between a pastor and the people she/he serves?
 - Why does vulnerability seem to be an important part of strengthening relationships?
- What do you think it means to honor another person? Is honoring someone the same thing as valuing them?
- What role does empathy play in honoring another, and what would that look like?
- What are ways that a layperson may be able to create a context of worth and honor for their pastor?



AUTHENTICITY

IN A CULTURE OF MASKS

Vulnerability and Honor

Clergy: Vulnerability Discussion

- Tell a story from your past where you felt really good about yourself.
- Remember a time when you felt worthless, incompetent, or exposed. Why did you feel this way?
- What is vulnerability, in your opinion?
- Why is vulnerability so difficult?
- What are the obstacles to vulnerability between a pastor and the people she/he serves?
- Why does vulnerability seem to be an important part of strengthening relationships?
- To what extent does our imagination impact the way we respond to the issue of vulnerability?
- What would it take to create an environment that felt safe and promoted vulnerability?

The Missional Connection

Manuscript by Bonnie Beam and Stephen Borger for the Authenticity in a Culture of Masks Retreat

What was that group exercise like for you?

How did you feel as the “presenter”?

How did you feel as the “listener”?

It required some vulnerability, right? Masks were off. It might have been difficult. You might have felt frightened to share a certain memory or experience. You were unsure how your “authentic self” was going to be received. Wasn’t it easier to listen? You weren’t on the hot seat. You weren’t the only one being vulnerable. But, if you were truly listening, you still had to be emotionally engaged at some level, right?

Dr. Brené Brown, courage and shame researcher, calls this empathy. It is a kind of active listening that allows the other person’s experience to resonate with your own experiences. Of course, you can listen with your mask on and keep the other person’s feelings at arm’s length, or you can listen with vulnerability and allow your own emotions to connect with what the person is sharing.

Show Brené Brown empathy video clip¹.

Imagine creating a culture in our churches where everyone is encouraged to be honest about himself or herself, gives and receives empathy, is able to safely relate to each other as fellow travelers on this road to Christlikeness, and is deeply dependent on God’s healing and transforming work within.

Didn’t Christ say that His followers will be known by their love? Love is a risky thing, though. It requires vulnerability. Love without vulnerability is simply charity. If we can learn to be vulnerable with each other and become known as loving people, our churches will be far more appealing to non-believers. We will be more authentic. People will see Christ in us, and we will be able to invite others into this journey of authenticity and transformation. We will be a missional church.

The mission of the Church of the Nazarene is to make Christlike disciples in the nations. However, we don’t make Christlike disciples by gritting our teeth and trying harder to be like Christ. Christlike disciples are made when we are real, when we are willing to admit our wrongs and mistakes, when we surrender to God’s will, and when we ask God to transform us.

1. Brené Brown. Brené Brown on Empathy (The RSA, 2013), 2 min., 53 sec., digital video. <http://Brenebrown.com/videos> or https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=10&v=1Evwgu369Jw&feature=emb_logo.

The power that raised Christ from the dead is a transforming power, and we all need that power to do a transforming work within us, heal our wounds, relieve our fears, and overcome our temptations. And we need others to walk with us as we go through this process together.

We have all heard someone testify in church and say something like this... “When I entered this church, I felt at home, like I could be myself.” Or, “When I met her, she accepted me and loved me, even though I was a mess.”

Sadly, if we accept our neighbor or the newcomer in church, faults and all, but we aren't real about our own shortcomings, we are wearing masks. We create a false sense of perfection. If we are not honest about our areas of struggle, shortcomings, and failures, then we inadvertently appear to have it all together. We need to be real about what the process of sanctification is like, so we don't perpetuate a culture of perfectionism. Our mask of silence hides what is truly happening inside of us – or what ISN'T happening.

When we have masks on, it doesn't take long for a new person in the church to pick up on the unwritten rules of the masked life.

1. Always be pleasant and happy.
2. Don't talk about your weaknesses or struggles.
3. Try hard to conform your behaviors to Christlikeness.

These rules need to be broken! Our transformation into Christlikeness is God's work, and we need to let people see how Christ accomplished that in our personal lives. Unfortunately, without us sharing what the sanctifying process is like and being vulnerable about the areas that still need God's sanctifying touch, new believers may rely on themselves instead of God to change their thoughts and behaviors. When they realize Christlikeness is not possible on their own, they may resort to wearing a mask to hide the lack of Christlikeness or leave to avoid hypocrisy.

Sometimes, we look at other people who are trying really hard to “behave correctly” and we think, “They have it all together.” We do not hear them talk about their emotional wounds. We do not hear them share their fears and temptations, so we assume they do not have any. Yet didn't Christ, on the night before He was crucified, invite His disciples to join Him as He prayed through His emotional struggle?

Authenticity is not about “arrival at a destination.” Authenticity is about being open and honest about the journey. We need to create safe spaces where we can be honest. We need to build safe relationships where we are encouraged to embrace our identity as “loved by God” and where we spur one another on toward surrender to the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work. We need mutual sharing, vulnerability, empathy, and godly counsel. We need authenticity.

Authenticity is an indispensable characteristic of a missional church. Yet, authenticity is one of those tricky words, like humility. If you are convinced you have it, then it is likely that you don't. Authenticity is something we strive for, but it is less of a destination and more of a daily choice. It is never a straight line from being inauthentic to being authentic.

It is more like a heart monitor or the stock market graph. We know that this is not a perfect journey, but if we want to be the missional people of God, we must commit to taking the journey together, acknowledging the perfectly imperfect journey.

Jason Vickers writes that “what is ascribed to the church in [the creeds] is like the kingdom of God itself, an eschatological reality to which the church bears witness and toward which the church lives and strains, however imperfectly.” He reminds the Church “not to succumb to denial, despair or resignation. To do so underestimates the power of the Holy Spirit who sanctifies the church right here and now,” and the Holy Spirit will enable the church to be what it has been called to be². As Kingdom citizens living in the present reality of the Kingdom, one that has come and is coming, we are called to authenticity.

There are probably a number of measuring lines we could use as we consider what authentic living looks like in our lives and in our churches, but perhaps there is none better than finances. Money, stewardship, mammon – they are all biblical terms. Of course, other measuring lines would include justice, caring for the poor and marginalized, lives of obedience to God, love of neighbor, but notice that all of these themes are connected to money and possessions in one way or another. As Walter Brueggemann has reminded us; “we are called to live toward the common good,”³ and that most certainly involves how we handle finances.

If our church is to be truly authentic, open, honest, and vulnerable, it must demonstrate this authenticity in its finances. The problem is that we don’t talk about money. Many pastors are hesitant to preach and teach on biblical stewardship management topics. Many (maybe most) of us live with a scarcity mentality. We live like there is only so much to go around and we have to get and keep our piece of the scarcity pie. We have forgotten that God’s Kingdom is a kingdom of abundance.

Money is also a very intimate issue. Henri Nouwen writes: “Money conversations are a greater taboo than conversations about sex or religion” in the church as well as in culture. “The reason for the taboo is that money has something to do with that intimate place in our heart where we need security, and we do not want to reveal our need or give away our security to someone who, maybe only accidentally, might betray us.”⁴ We must ask ourselves a question: If God is truly our security, why does money hold such a “sacred” place in our hearts, and even in our churches, that we cannot talk about it?

When we move toward real authenticity about finances, both personally and as a church body, we will become a desirable community. Those who are in bondage to a financial memory or a current money crisis, as well as those who live with financial shame, will find a community to which they will want to belong.

Here are four principles that will help form us into this kind of church and people, four principles that we can live by as we journey toward who God has called us to be.

2. Vickers, Jason E. *Minding The Good Ground* Waco, Texas (Baylor University Press, 2011), p.40.

3. Brueggemann, Walter. *Journey To The Common Good* Louisville, KY (Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), p.1

4. Nouwen, Henri J.M. *A Spirituality of Fundraising* Nashville (Upper Room Books, 2010), pp. 30-31

1. As a missional church and as God's beloved, we want our lives to be characterized by grateful contentment.
2. As a missional church, our worldview is one of abundance not scarcity.
3. As a missional church, we are committed to the common good.
4. As a missional church, we intentionally partner together in an authentic community.

We want our lives to be characterized by grateful contentment as God's beloved because we see our world through the lens of God's abundant love. We can truly seek the common good because we understand that our "net worth" is not the sum total of our assets on a balance sheet. We are content in God's daily promises and provision, His abundant redeeming grace, and the knowledge that we are God's beloved. This kind of contentment releases shame's grip on our lives. It does not happen in an instant. It is a lifelong journey of spiritual formation that must happen in our communities. We make this journey together.

Our worldview is one of abundance, not scarcity. In Matthew 6:26, Jesus says, "Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?" In this short passage, Jesus says five times, "don't worry." This stands in stark contrast to the prevailing worldview of economics that studies the efforts of individuals and communities to make the best use of *finite resources* to meet the *infinite demand* for goods and services. God's people have a long history of struggling with this scarcity mentality. In the midst of the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve felt they lacked something that the forbidden fruit offered. In the Exodus story, God provided manna for the children of Israel with the promise that "there will be enough each day for everyone." Yet, there were those who hoarded more than they needed for that day, and by morning, it was rotten. As a missional church, we believe God has, and will, provide all that we "need."

We are also committed to the common good. Walter Brueggemann suggests that the story of the children of Israel in Exodus gives three "peculiar claims" to Kingdom citizens (missional churches).

- "Persons living in a system of anxiety and fear—and consequently greed—have no time or energy for the common good."
- "An immense act of generosity is required in order to break the death grip of the system of fear, anxiety, and greed. God did that for Israel. The Church has been called to do that for our world. We are called to re-enact the generous acts of God."
- "Those who are immersed in such immense gifts of generosity are able to get their minds off themselves and can be about the work of the community not about the entitlements of the self."⁵

5. Brueggemann, *Journey To The Common Good* pp.28-29.

If the church only echoes the world's kingdom of scarcity, it has failed its calling. As a missional church, we own and live into the call to the common good.

Finally, we intentionally partner together to form an authentic community. Six times in his letter to the church at Philippi, Paul used a form of the Greek word *koinonia* to describe the relationship he feels with these brothers and sisters in Christ. This word is translated as partners, partnership, fellowship, and sharing. Shame pulls us to a place of aloneness and isolation, but true *koinonia* – fellowship and partnership – brings us together. As we intentionally journey together in honesty, vulnerability, and empathy, we will thrive.

As we build this authentic community, we must always seek and welcome others into this fellowship, into this journey of love and authenticity. The song, "Come As You Are," by David Crowder, captures the unconditional love and acceptance that we find in Christ.

So, lay down your burdens
Lay down your shame
All who are broken
Lift up your face
Oh wanderer, come home
You're not too far
So, lay down your hurt
Lay down your heart
Come as you are

Imagine the impact if our churches, our authentic missional communities, cultivated the same spirit of love and acceptance. Imagine creating an atmosphere of honesty and empathy where everyone has a community to walk with them in their journey toward Christlikeness. Imagine a church that is the hands and face of God described in Psalm 145:14, "The LORD upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down." (NIV) Let us lift up the face of those that feel broken and abandoned, so they can see God's face of love. Let us be an authentic community of broken people in the process of healing and transformation. Let us seek and embrace the broken and hurting in our world and invite them into this healing community and relationship with Christ.



AUTHENTICITY

IN A CULTURE OF MASKS

Action Steps for Individual Churches

Contentment as God's Beloved

- What are some practices that would foster contentment in Christ or demonstrate our identity as God's beloved?
- What can we do to encourage our congregation to see the lost as God's beloved?
- Is there any area of your life where the Word and Spirit have revealed a place of growth or change to you today?

Worldview of abundance and not scarcity

- What are some examples of scarcity or abundance thinking in our church?
- How can we talk about church finances in an authentic way that communicates God's abundance?
- Are there ways we talk about church finances that appear inauthentic?

AUTHENTICITY

IN A CULTURE OF MASKS

Commitment to the common good

- Share examples of how you or your church have shared in contributing to the common good.
- How can we promote generosity for the common good?
- How could a commitment to the common good be missional in our setting?

Community of authentic partnerships

- In what ways are we already authentic, and where do we need to become more authentic?
- What gets in the way of authenticity in our church?
- How can we create safe spaces/times for vulnerability and empathy?

Practical steps moving forward

Based on what you have experienced during this retreat, develop four practical steps for you/your church that will foster authenticity and a missional mindset.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

AUTHENTICITY COVENANT

We Confess	Therefore We Promise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our source of identity and worth is God alone. • We are beloved image bearers of God. 	<p>We will not allow our identity and worth to be rooted in our knowledge, our money, our position, our possessions, or anything else that can serve as a mask to keep us from being truly known by one another.</p>
<p>By the grace of God, we will be rooted and established in love. <i>Ephesians 3:14-22; Genesis 1:26-31; John 13:34</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God has lavished us with love and grace. • We have everything we need to live a life that pleases God. • Freely we have received, so freely we will give. 	<p>We will remind ourselves of God's abundance. We will trust that God will meet our needs as we give generously. We will be open and honest when dealing with church finances. We will listen to one another and seek true understanding of each other.</p>
<p>By the grace of God, we will live in God's abundance and reject the idea of scarcity in God's kingdom. <i>1 John 3:1; James 1:17; 2 Peter 1:3; Matthew 10:8</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Triune God is the model of relational integrity and wholeness, and we bear His image. • Our gifts and resources are for strengthening God's church. 	<p>We will offer our gifts and resources for God's purposes. We will seek the common good of all people, inside and outside the Church. We will lay aside any agenda that could become self-serving, and invite the Holy Spirit to guide our actions and discussions. We will be ministers of reconciliation within the church and throughout the world.</p>
<p>By the grace of God, we will build one another up in truth and love. <i>Ephesians 4:2, 14-16, 29-32; Proverbs 20:19; 2 Corinthians 5:19-20</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God will enable us to be vulnerable with each other. • Conflict can help us grow stronger together, but unresolved conflict festers and gives birth to resentment. • God is the true source of courage, love, and unity. 	<p>We will value authenticity. We will practice being vulnerable and will receive vulnerability with empathy. We will honor the role of confidentiality in our sharing so that we can share openly and build trust. We will refrain from gossip and unwholesome talk. We will resolve conflicts quickly with honesty, love, and empathy with Jesus Christ as our guide. We will encourage one another in our journey toward Christlikeness.</p>
<p>By the grace of God, we will honor Him as He sanctifies us through and through. <i>1 Thessalonians 5:11-24; Luke 6:41-42; Matthew 5:21-26</i></p>	

Church Name: _____

Date: _____

Signatures:

Worship Resources

Authenticity in a Culture of Masks Retreat: A Financial Conversation for Pastors and Lay Leaders

Themes: Social Holiness; Church as Community

Songs (can be sung or listened to):

- “Let Us Join, ‘Tis God Commands” (Charles Wesley, *Wesley Hymns* #104) Meter: 7.7.7.7, Tune: *Hendon*; Meter: 7.7.7.7.D w. Ref., Tune: *Mendelssohn* https://hymnary.org/text/let_us_join_tis_as_god_commands#pagescans
- “O How Good It Is” (Keith & Kristyn Getty) <https://www.gettymusic.com/oh-how-good-it-is/>
- “All Are Welcome” (Marty Haugen, *Gather Comprehensive*, 2nd ed #741) Tune: *Two Oaks* https://hymnary.org/text/let_us_build_a_house_where_love_can_dwe
- “As a Fire is Meant for Burning (Ruth Duck, *Gather Comprehensive*, 2nd ed #643) Meter: 8.7.8.7.D, Tune: *Beach Spring* https://hymnary.org/text/as_a_fire_is_meant_for_burning

Prayers/Readings (can be read singularly, in unison, or responsively):

- Psalm 40 or 133
- Ephesians 2:10-22
- “Let [the person] who cannot be alone beware of community . . . But the reverse is also true: Let [the person] who is not in community beware of being alone . . . Only in the fellowship do we learn to be rightly alone and only in aloneness do we learn to live rightly in the fellowship . . . both begin at the same time, namely, with the call of Jesus Christ.” – Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (Harper & Row, 1954), pp. 77-78
- “. . . the basis for Christian ecclesial community, church, is a gathering around the person of Jesus Christ and a living in his Spirit. And that Spirit too is not some vague bird or abstract tonality. The spirit of Jesus, the Holy Spirit, is defined in scripture as charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, long-suffering, fidelity, mildness, and chastity. Living in these virtues is what bind us into community . . .” – Ronald Rolheiser, *The Holy Longing* (Doubleday, 1999), p. 120
- “Solitary religion is not to be found [in the Gospel of Christ]. ‘Holy solitaires’ is a phrase no more consistent with the gospel than holy adulterers. The gospel of Christ knows of no religion, but social; no holiness but social holiness. Faith working by love, is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection.” – John Wesley, preface to the 1739 edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*

- Sequence, Feast of Pentecost, Stephen Langton, in George Appleton, editor, *The Oxford Book of Prayer* (Oxford University Press, 1985), #676, p. 209

Come thou Holy Spirit
Send from highest heaven
Radiance of thy light.

Without thy holy presence
All is dark
Nothing free from sin.

Come, father of the poor
Come, giver of all gifts
Come, light of every heart.

What is soiled cleanse
What is dry refresh
What is wounded heal.

Of comforters the best
Dear guest of every soul
Refreshment ever sweet.

What is rigid bend
What is frozen warm
Guide what goes astray.

In our labour rest
Coolness of our heat
Comfort in our grief.

Give thy faithful ones
Who in thee confide
Sevenfold hallowing.

O most blessed light
Fill the inmost hearts
Of thy faithful ones.

Give goodness its reward
Give journey safe through death
Give joy that has no end.

- “As Children of Light” adapted from Sing to the Lord Nazarene Hymnal #715 (Psalm 43:3; John 8:12b; 2 Corinthians 4:6a; Ephesians 5:8a; 1 Peter 2:9; Matthew 5:14-16; Ephesians 5:8b in the NRSV)

Send out your light and your truth, let them lead me.

Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

It is God who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” who has shone his light in our hearts.

Once you were darkness, but now in the lord you are light.

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people.

In order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

You are the light of the world.

A city built on a hill cannot be hid.

No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket.

Instead they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Live as children of light.

Theme: Financial Narratives

Songs (can be sung or listened to):

- “Lord I Lift Your Name on High” (Rick Founds)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6l6orjM3NI>
- “For the Fruit of All Creation” (Fred Pratt Green, *Sing to the Lord Nazarene Hymnal* #773)
Meter: 8.4.8.4.8.8.8.4, Tune: Ard Hyd y Nos https://hymnary.org/text/for_the_fruit_of_all_creation
- “Blessed Assurance” (Fanny Crosby, *Sing to the Lord Nazarene Hymnal* #442) Meter: 9.10.9.9.
w. Ref., Tune: Assurance https://hymnary.org/text/blessed_assurance_jesus_is_mine
- “My Life is in You, Lord” (Daniel Gardner) <https://muzikum.eu/en/123-9985-112224/don-moen/my-life-is-in-you-lyrics.html>

Prayers/Readings (can be read singularly, in unison, or responsively):

- Psalm 107 or 139
- John 4:1-30
- “Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; Through Christ our Lord. Amen.” – *Collect for Purity, in The Book of Common Prayer* (Seabury Press, 1979), p. 355
- “Almighty God, whose loving hand has given us all that we possess: Grant us grace that we may honor you with our substance, and, remembering the account which we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” – *For the Right Use of God’s Gifts, in The Book of Common Prayer* (Seabury Press, 1979), p. 827
- “If God speaks to us at all in this world, if God speaks anywhere, it is into our personal lives that he speaks . . . his words . . . are ultimately always incarnate words . . . always veiled, subtle, cryptic, so that it is left to us to delve their meaning, to fill in the vowels, for ourselves by means of all the faith and imagination we can muster . . . it is mainly for some clue to where I am going that I search through where I have been, for some hint as to who I am becoming or failing to become . . . Listen. Your life is happening. You are happening . . . There is no chance thing through which God cannot speak.” – Frederick Buechner, *The Sacred Journey* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1982), pp. 1,4,6

- “Be the Gardener of My Soul” in Richard Foster, *Prayers from the Heart* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1994), p. 3

Spirit of the Living God, be the Gardener of my soul. For so long I have been waiting, silent and still—experiencing a winter of the soul. But now, in the strong name of Jesus Christ, I dare to ask:

Clear away the dead growth of the past,
Break up the hard clods of custom and routine,
Stir in the rich compost of vision and challenge,
Bury deep in my soul the implanted Word,
Cultivate and water and tend my heart,
Until new life buds and opens and flowers.

Amen.

- “A Prayer for Telling Our Stories” by Kelly Rae Roberts
<https://www.kellyraeroberts.com/stories/>

May we know our lives as beautiful,
messy, masterful works of art.
May we celebrate our fullness—the highs
and lows.

May we remain rooted in our heart's
truths, and not fall to comparison.

May we believe that we are immensely
valuable, wise and good. NOW.

May we embrace our power to recreate
and redefine our stories.

May we honor our wholeness.
May we speak our gratitude.
May we be, always, brave in love.

Theme: Vulnerability & Blessing

Songs (can be sung or listened to):

- “I Stand Before Thee, Lord” by Beverly Condray © 1971 by Word Music

I stand before Thee, Lord, with the knowledge of my humanness,
And in pure amazement that you don't love me less.

My weaknesses are great, and sometimes my life is just a sham,
Yet, in spite of all, Lord, you love me as I am.

I cannot understand your great love that's all encompassing,
Yet, I do accept it, and to this gift I'll cling.

Lord, help me to be free, free to live the life you've given me,
So that I may share it, and feel another's need.

It hurts to get involved, for that means I bear another's pain,
Yet, you bear it always, and for that Christ was slain.

Lord, you've forgiven me, and that brings responsibility,
Lead me now to be, Lord, what you would have me be.

- “Your Deep, Deep Love” (Terry & Randy Butler) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNCvxOoWwNk>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBdFFyL8Xjk>
- “He Giveth More Grace” (Annie Johnson Flint, *Sing to the Lord Nazarene Hymnal* #101)
- “Be Not Afraid” (Robert Dufford, *Gather Comprehensive*, 2nd ed #596) https://hymnary.org/text/you_shall_cross_the_barren_desert; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEOt7yXCaJI>

Prayers/Readings (can be read singularly, in unison, or responsively):

- Psalm 23 or 40
- Luke 1:46-55
- “Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity. It is the source of hope, empathy, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path . . . Because true belonging only happens when we present our authentic, imperfect selves to the world, our sense of belonging can never be greater than our level of self-acceptance.” – Brené Brown, *Daring Greatly* (Penguin Random House, 2012), pp. 34, 145-146

- “There is much to drag us back, O Lord: empty pursuits, trivial pleasures, unworthy cares. There is much to frighten us away: pride that makes us reluctant to accept help; cowardice that recoils from sharing your suffering; anguish at the prospect of confessing our sins to you. But you are stronger than all these forces. We call you our redeemer and saviour because you redeem us from our empty, trivial existence, you save us from our foolish fears. This is your work which you have completed and will continue to complete every moment.” – by Soren Kierkegaard, “Our Weakness, Your Strength” in *HarperCollins Book of Prayers* (Castle Books, 1993), p. 230
- “But all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.” – Lady Julian of Norwich, in Richard Foster, *Prayers from the Heart* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1994), p. 19
- “Discipline” by George Herbert, in *HarperCollins Book of Prayers* (Castle Books, 1993), pp. 191-192

Throw away thy rod, Throw away thy wrath; O my God, Take the gentle path.	Then let wrath remove; Love will do the deed; For with love Stony hearts will bleed.
For my heart's desire Unto thine is bent; I aspire To a full consent.	Love is swift of foot; Love's a man of war, And can shoot, And can hit from far.
Not a word or look I affect to own, But, by book, And thy book alone.	Who can 'scape his bow? That which wrought on thee, Brought thee low, Needs must work on me.
Though I fail, I weep; Though I halt in pace, Yet I creep To the throne of grace.	Throw away thy rod; Though man frailties hath, Thou are God. Throw away thy wrath.

- “The Guest House” by Mewlana Jalaluddin Rumi (1207-1273) in Coleman Barks, translator, *The Essential Rumi* (HarperSanFrancisco, 2004), p. 109

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
Some momentary awareness comes
As an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,

continued on next page

Who violently sweep your house
Empty of its furniture,
Still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
Meet them at the door laughing,
And welcome them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
Because each has been sent
As a guide from beyond.

- “Patient Trust” by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ, in Michael Harter, SJ, editor, *Hearts on Fire* (The Institute of Jesuit Resources, 1993), p. 58

Above all, trust in the slow work of God.
We are quite naturally impatient in everything
to reach the end without delay.
We should like to skip the intermediate stages.
We are impatient of being on the way to something
unknown, something new.
And yet it is the law of all progress
that it is made by passing through
some stages of instability—
and that it may take a very long time.

And so I think it is with you;
your ideas mature gradually—let them grow,
let them shape themselves, without undue haste.
Don’t try to force them on,
as though you could be today what time
(that is to say, grace and circumstances
acting on your own good will)
will make of you tomorrow.

Only God could say what this new spirit
gradually forming within you will be.
Give Our Lord the benefit of believing
that his hand is leading you,
and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself
in suspense and incomplete.

Themes: Action Steps; Covenant Relationships

Songs (can be sung or listened to):

- “Born by the Holy Spirit’s Breath” (Timothy Dudley-Smith, *Sing to the Lord Nazarene Hymnal* #318) Meter: L.M.; Tunes: *Germany, Duke Street, Hamburg*
- “Arise My Soul, Arise” (Charles Wesley, *Sing to the Lord Nazarene Hymnal* #432)
- “The Power of Your Love” (Geoff Bullock) https://hymnary.org/text/lord_i_come_to_you_let_my_heart_be; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ga6Qtxzd6vk>
- “The Summons” (John Bell, *Gather Comprehensive*, 2nd ed #687) https://hymnary.org/text/will_you_come_and_follow_me; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o469PRLdbHU>
- “Take My Life and Let It Be Consecrated” (Frances Havergal, *Sing to the Lord Nazarene Hymnal* #455)

Prayers/Readings (can be read singularly, in unison, or responsively):

- Psalm 16 or 103
- Romans 12
- “I am no longer my own, but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you or laid aside for you, exalted for you or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty; let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and heartily yield all things to your pleasure and disposal. And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you are mine, and I am yours. So be it.” – John Wesley’s Covenant Renewal Prayer (1780) in Frank Whaling, ed, *John and Charles Wesley: Selected Writings and Hymns* (Paulist, 1981), p. 387
- “Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will—all that I have and call my own. You have given it all to me. To you, Lord, I return it. Everything is yours; do with it what you will. Give me only your love and your grace. That is enough for me.” – Ignatius of Loyola’s *Suscipe* (1576) in David L. Fleming, SJ, *Draw Me Into Your Friendship* (Institute of Jesuit Resources, 1996), p. 177
- “O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment, and light rises up in darkness for the godly: Grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what you would have us to do, that the Spirit of wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in your light we may see light, and in your straight path may not stumble; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” – *For Guidance*, in *The Book of Common Prayer* (Seabury Press, 1979), p. 832
- “Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you; and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.” – *A Prayer of Self-Dedication*, in *The Book of Common Prayer* (Seabury Press, 1979), pp. 832-833

continued on next page

- “A Prayer Everyone Can Pray” – Thomas Merton, *Thoughts in Solitude* (Farrar, Strauss, & Giroux, 1958), p. 79

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.

Nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think
I am following you well
does not mean that
I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.

And I hope that I will never do anything
apart from that desire.

And I know that if I do this
you will lead me by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore, I will trust you always,
though I may seem to be lost
and in the shadow of death.

I will not fear,
for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me
to face my perils alone.