

REVIVING MISSION

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AWAKENING
TO THE EVERYDAY
MOVEMENT OF GOD



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A NEW SEASON AND A NEW WAY



*Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland.*

ISAIAH 43:18-19

WE BELIEVE GOD IS DOING SOMETHING NEW.

Just as the horizon begins to glow before the dawn and thunder from an oncoming storm rumbles before rain starts to fall, we believe we're seeing signs of a new season at hand.

While the outpouring at Asbury was certainly beautiful, what's remarkable is that it was not exceptional. During the spring of 2023, reports started to emerge from numerous campuses across the United States that God was moving in similar ways—pouring out fresh expressions of his love and encountering students with his presence.

In the weeks before and after the outpouring at Asbury, historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) like Jackson State reported movements of prayer that led to dozens of students surrendering their lives to Jesus in repentance. One campus minister at Tuskegee University wondered if she was in the wrong room when she showed up to her first Bible study of the year and found over a hundred students gathered together eager to encounter God!

Smaller Christian schools like Lee University, Cedarville University, and Azusa Pacific found their chapels full of students stirred to day-and-night worship and intercession saturated by the presence of God.¹

Large public universities like Purdue, Auburn, Texas A&M, and Florida State hosted student gatherings that filled venues and overflowed into spontaneous public baptisms in campus ponds and public fountains previously used to haze students after nights of excessive partying.²

Student conferences began to sell out and become standing-room-only events. One such retreat in Utah had booked a hotel anticipating a gathering of several hundred students, but because of the overwhelming interest, had to set up a (revival?) tent in the parking lot to accommodate everyone who wanted to attend.

Across the country, testimonies from experienced campus ministers of all types began to resound with a common refrain—“We’ve never seen spiritual hunger like this.” Together, they marveled as a generation of students whose lives were indelibly marked by the Covid-19 pandemic found themselves living the words of the prophet Joel, who promised that the Lord “will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten” (Joel 2:25).

Though historic in its own context, what God has been doing on campuses across the United States is but an echo of the dynamic ways God is moving all around the world. As Nana Yaw Offei Awuku, director of the Lausanne Younger Leaders Generation

initiative,³ has said, “Though things may *look* stagnant, below the surface, something is *boiling*.”⁴

In the spring of 2024, God moved in power at a conference in East London cohosted by a coalition of diverse ministries and three churches who had formerly seen each other as rivals. Hundreds of young people in attendance responded to a call to holiness—at one point the entire conference was lying prostrate before God—and consecrated themselves to the Lord through a spontaneous, all-night prayer vigil. Experienced leaders from around the world who attended the event testified to the unique sense of God’s presence upon the gathering saying, “I’ve never seen anything like it.”⁵

In France, a country known for its secularism, new expressions of faith are emerging. The National Council of French Evangelicals (CNEF) reports that, on average, one new church is being planted every week,⁶ and more than twelve thousand people were baptized across the country on Easter Sunday 2024.⁷

Rather than allow their rhythms of prayer and worship to be disrupted by Covid-19 lockdowns, university students in Bergen, Norway, gathered to seek God every week of the pandemic by meeting *outside*, often in freezing temperatures and snow. What began as a collection of hungry students on a single campus has now become an international network of like-minded missional communities reaching to England, Germany, and Denmark.⁸

Countries in Latin America are seeing a surge in spiritual passion, and a region that was once primarily a mission-receiving field is now becoming a mission-sending force. Shortly before the pandemic, THE SEND Brazil convened 140,000 people in three different stadiums for a twelve-hour event focused on mobilizing young people for the Great Commission.⁹

Recently, stories have surfaced from around the globe (including Thailand,¹⁰ Nigeria,¹¹ and Southern California¹²) of mass public

baptism events where more than a thousand people have chosen to be baptized in a single instance—stories that echo back to the Jesus Movement of the 1970s.

As globalization has amplified, God has been using the migration of people to accelerate mission in surprising ways. Over the last thirty years, thousands of churches have been planted by Latin American immigrants¹³ in countries like Spain and Portugal, and some African denominations now include over 750 congregations across England, where they are continuing to plant an average of twenty-five new churches a year!¹⁴ In a striking inversion of missiological history, many wonder whether God might be using these “diaspora churches” to help re-evangelize increasingly secular populations.¹⁵

Further, God is using house-church movements around the world like those in China to accelerate his mission on a global scale. The Lausanne Movement now estimates that “2,000 mainland Chinese house-church missionaries serve cross-culturally overseas,”¹⁶ and globally, “there are now 9 million churches emerging from or part of a CPM (church-planting movement)” — an increase of 350 percent in the last ten years.¹⁷

Fueled by the dynamic movement of God in countries like Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Kenya, it’s currently projected that 50 percent of the world’s Christians will live in Africa by 2050, and even predominantly Muslim nations like Guinea-Bissau are seeing massive crowds flock to evangelistic events. After one such gathering, thousands of teenagers took to the streets in the capital city singing songs of worship and proclaiming the gospel.¹⁸

In Iran, where there were fewer than three hundred known believers in 1970, there are now reports that perhaps a million people have come to faith, a trend which would make the Iranian church the fastest-growing church in the world.¹⁹ Though staggering to consider, it’s believed that more Iranian Muslims have come to

faith in Christ in the last fifty years than in the previous fourteen centuries combined.²⁰

Though these stories—and *thousands* more like them that are emerging around the world—are sourced in radically different contexts, it's remarkable to consider what they have in common and how they paint a collective picture of the new thing God is doing in our day.

These are movements fueled not by flashy effects but faithful obedience. These stories are not monodirectional but polycentric and rooted in the collaborative partnership of the whole body of Christ. They aren't directed by leaders with vast social media networks but anonymous saints laying down their lives (sometimes literally) for the sake of Jesus. These are movements whose primary actors aren't paid professionals but ordinary people offering their sincere yes to God's invitation—amateurs compelled not by their credentials but their love. These are movements that, while exceptional in impact, are decidedly everyday in spirit.

It's been said that when it comes to reports of revival, one would "far rather be gullible than cynical," and this is a sentiment that resonates in our own spirits.²¹ We've lived enough life and led enough ministry to know that things often don't work out as we'd planned, and to hope is to risk disappointment.

Even so, we find ourselves wondering at what God is doing in our day, and our conviction in writing this book is that these kinds of stories—whether spontaneous or coordinated—aren't isolated incidents.²² Rather, just as trees bud in anticipation of spring, we believe they are signs of a new season that God is releasing. Our contention is that the everyday characteristics of these movements are in fact an invitation to us as God's people in this cultural moment. We believe he is calling the church to awaken to the everyday movement of God all around us—he's inviting us to embrace his reviving mission.

WINTER AND SPRING

Just as resurrection is only possible after death, spring only arrives after winter, and we can all agree that this has been a season of “winter” around the world.²³

From global catastrophes like the Covid-19 pandemic and the climate crisis; to contempt-fueled conflicts in Ukraine, Israel, and Gaza; to escalating refugee crises around the world; to rising political polarization, the last few years have been uniquely marked by death and disruption.

Here in the United States, we are navigating multiple simultaneous sociopolitical crises that have only added to the disintegration so many of us feel.²⁴ Cultural issues like the amplification of Christian nationalism, tension caused by ongoing racial injustice, shifting cultural norms around human sexuality, and the mental health crisis have had a compounding effect on our communities. Many within and beyond the church feel increasingly disenfranchised by and cynical toward institutions once thought to be trustworthy.

Unfortunately, the American church has not been immune to these disruptions. Too often we have been complicit in propagating a kind of counterfeit Christianity marked by narcissistic leadership, the co-opting of biblical truth to suit a political agenda, and the reinforcement of systems that have fostered spiritual abuse. This kind of imitation faith has had a profound impact on the community of faith and the church’s credibility in the broader culture.

Internally, many of us who still identify as Christians find ourselves increasingly dissatisfied with what feels like an anemic spirituality that pales in comparison to what we see in the New Testament. Further, many of us are disillusioned by the idolatry being exposed among God’s people and resonate with those who are actively deconstructing their faith. It’s hard not to be cynical about

the future of the church when we've had to endure an endless exposé of toxic systems like those captured in *The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill*, *Shiny Happy People*, or the parade of scandals involving previously respected Christian leaders.²⁵

Externally, the result has been an erosion of credibility for the church in the West—particularly among younger generations who are abandoning faith traditions at an alarming rate.²⁶ Fueled in part by a legitimate critique of the ways that historic “Christian mission” has often been co-opted by colonialism and used as an excuse for exploitation, many young people increasingly view “mission” as synonymous with oppression and Christianity as devoid of integrity. They see the ways we have been compromised by unholy alliances that render us at best irrelevant and, at worst, part of the problem to be resisted.

WHAT'S “OUT THERE” IS “IN HERE”

Of course, the issue is that we all know—at least in our honest moments—that the problem of counterfeit faith isn't just “out there” with others; it's also “in here”—latent in our own lives. Though perhaps not to the extent as the exploitative expressions above, the same issues that plague the collective life of God's people also shape our own stories.

We too know what it's like to live a life of feeble faith absent of transformational power. We know that our hearts are saturated with skepticism. We experience the same kind of pervasive weariness and fatigue that marks our culture.²⁷ We too know how it feels to experience contempt toward those different from us. We also know what it's like to be more concerned about our comfort than compelled by our convictions. We too are familiar with a reticence to risk that leaves us unwilling to relinquish control. We are often marked by the same ambient anxiety as the world around us.²⁸

It's the throes of winter that make us yearn for spring. Despite the gaps we see “out there” and “in here,” stories like those above testify to a fresh hunger that is beginning to stir. People everywhere—young and old alike—are longing to live lives marked by wonder, curiosity, generosity, and resilience. The world—though calloused by counterfeit Christianity—is as desperate as ever for a real, authentic experience of what is true. We, the people of God, are eager for a movement of God that might lead us into beautifully everyday expressions of reviving mission.

REVIVING MISSION

This book is rooted in a few core convictions. First, we know that the world and the church need revival. Due to the disruptions of these years and a chronic pattern of compromise, we have lost the way of Jesus. Second, we rejoice that God is doing something new in our day—we believe that we are entering a new season that will be marked by the everyday movement of God. Third, we are convinced that a new season calls for a new way forward—a fresh expression of holistic mission rooted in the life of Jesus that can steward the season we are entering.

We chose to name this book *Reviving Mission* because we love the ways this phrase resonates with these convictions.

First, *Reviving Mission* speaks to the ways *our conceptions of mission need to be revived*. Too often Christian mission has not resembled the way of Jesus, and our credibility has been compromised. However, rather than abandoning gospel mission altogether, we believe that our understanding and practice of mission need to be revived. We need a fresh articulation of authentic kingdom mission in our increasingly broken world.

Second, *Reviving Mission* speaks to the *impact of mission on the people and communities we are sent to*. Jesus' mission is a reviving mission that embodies resurrection life in places of death and

expresses the kingdom of God “on earth as it is in heaven.” Just like Ezekiel’s prophetic vision of a river flowing from the temple—“where the river flows everything will live” (Ezekiel 47:9)—so too the mission of Jesus revives neighborhoods and workplaces, campuses and countries, cities and families. Jesus invites us to join him in this mission as agents of revival in a world that is thirsty for renewal.

Finally, *Reviving Mission* speaks to the *impact of mission on the people and communities who are sent*. Instead of a mission that burns people out to bring revival to others, the promise of mission in the way of Jesus is that it is reviving for us as missionaries. Jesus invites us to taste the resurrection life we testify about. Our conviction is that Jesus’ reviving mission transforms not only the mission field but also the mission force and enables us to live lives of flourishing faith.

THE NEW WAY IS AN OLD WAY

There’s a Ghanaian proverb based on the Sankofa bird that translates as, “It is wise to go back to the ways you have forgotten.”²⁹ Often the only way we can move forward is to look back and bring the treasures of the past into the future.

Though we believe that a new season calls for a new way forward, our conviction is that this new way isn’t something we need to create; it’s something we need to rediscover. In fact, we’re convinced that the new way is actually an old way.

Centuries of history and the apparatus of Christendom³⁰ can make us think Jesus was a kind of stained-glass superhero.³¹ However, when we consider the sociopolitical backdrop of a first-century Mediterranean world ruled by emperors and elites, it’s fitting to describe Jesus’ life and the movement he started as decidedly “everyday.”

We know virtually nothing of the first thirty years of Jesus’ life beyond that he lived as a craftsman in a small Galilean village far

from anything resembling the halls of power in Rome. He was conceived under socially dubious circumstances, fled his home as a refugee, lost his adopted father sometime during his upbringing, and was no stranger to family drama. Jesus was an everyday kind of guy.

The genesis of his ministry was a profound encounter with God as he was baptized in the Jordan River along with crowds of Jewish pilgrims. After a forty-day period of consecration in the wilderness, he launched his ministry not in Jerusalem, but a fishing village down the road from his hometown—a very everyday sort of place.

Even as he started preaching and performing decidedly extraordinary miracles, he was regularly found eating with friends (and no doubt some strangers) around a table of shared hospitality. Indeed, the families who welcomed him soon became spiritual families, and their everyday homes—whether those of Peter or Levi or Mary—soon became home bases from which he ministered.

As Jesus grew in friendship with a group of decidedly ordinary folks, he called them to become his disciples—that they might be with him and be sent out with authority as his representatives.³² Despite their lack of formal leadership training, they accepted his invitation, and these ordinary people started to do what Jesus had done—extraordinary things like preaching about the kingdom of God, healing diseases, and delivering those around them from demonic affliction.

Over the coming years, this group of friends would traverse the countryside of Israel witnessing the remarkable but also wrestling with confusion and making a host of mistakes. Through it all Jesus taught them how to live a different kind of everyday life: how to pray, how to love, how to forgive, how to be grateful, and (we have to imagine) how to tell a good joke.³³

Though it started under the radar, eventually this new kind of everyday life threatened the established powers, and Jesus met an

everyday kind of death. He was executed as a common criminal, alone and abandoned by almost everyone, including (apparently) the God he had entrusted himself to. He was buried without fanfare in a stranger's tomb by people who barely knew him while his closest friends fled into hiding.

Of course, we now know that Jesus' death was anything but ordinary and on the third day something historically extraordinary happened as he was resurrected from the dead. In the remarkable days that followed, he once again took up his regular patterns of eating with his friends in homes and teaching his disciples how to embody this new, everyday way until he (shockingly!) left them in charge and told them to wait for the gift he'd promised to send them.

As the disciples continued to do what they had always done with Jesus—gathering together and spending time in earnest prayer—the gift Jesus had promised arrived in the person of the Holy Spirit. Energized by that gift, Jesus' followers began replicating his way everywhere they went. Though they were later described derisively as “unschooled, ordinary men” (Acts 4:13), Jesus' friends bore witness to his life first in Jerusalem and Judea, then in Samaria, and eventually to the very ends of the earth. Church history records that Jesus' disciples traveled as far as Turkey (Philip), Rome (Simon Peter), England (Simon the Zealot), Ethiopia (Matthew), and India (Thomas), and that each of them laid down their lives for their friend.³⁴

Though it's hard to know how much true societal change they might have seen by the end of their lives,³⁵ in time they became a living embodiment of Jesus' parable of the yeast that worked through the whole batch of dough (Luke 13:20-21). In the space of just three hundred years, this ordinary group of friends, fueled by extraordinary affection for Jesus, had upended the Roman Empire and altered the course of global history.³⁶

For all the ways Christians have failed to embody the image of Jesus, his everyday followers had an undeniable impact on ancient society, as secular sociologist Rodney Stark reflects in his seminal work *The Rise of Christianity*:

Perhaps above all else, Christianity brought a new conception of humanity to a world saturated with capricious cruelty and the vicarious love of death. . . . What Christianity gave to its converts was nothing less than their humanity.³⁷

Today, billions of people in every country on the planet—a network as numerous as the stars in the Abrahamic sky—would declare themselves part of the disciples’ legacy and join in their joyful confession that “Jesus is Lord.”

THE OLD WAY IS AN EVERYDAY WAY

Because we come to this story through endless layers of history, it’s easy to miss how tenuous, how raggedy, how “everyday” it must have been for those living it in real time.

To be sure, Jesus stands alone, and his person is the pivot of history. He was (and is!) Immanuel, God with us, and he has no rival. But consider for a moment how arresting it is that God the Son came as he did—not riding on the clouds of heaven or descending on the temple ablaze with holiness such that everyone would know immediately how exceptional he was. No, he was born in obscurity to a teenage mother and lived for three decades in unrecognizable anonymity.

Though there were of course exceptions, at virtually every turn of his life, Jesus was underestimated. Even after his ministry began, people frequently failed to understand who he was—“though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him” (John 1:10). During his life, his closest companions consistently struggled to grasp his identity,³⁸ and even after his resurrection he

was mistaken for a gardener (John 20:15), a ghost (Luke 24:37), and a random traveler on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-18). Even when recognized, he consistently embraced an everyday existence like ours, spurning the temptation of celebrity as he directed those who did understand his identity to not disclose who he was (Mark 8:30).

Likewise, though they were used by God in profoundly transformative ways, Jesus' earliest disciples were entirely ordinary kinds of people. They were full of uncertainty and anxiety, marked by fear and failure, and characterized by confusion. Though we mean no irreverence, it's simply true that they fumbled their way forward as they followed Jesus in the life of faith.

Seems like we're in good company.


How different, really, was the life of faith in the pages of Acts from what it is today? They too were surrounded by disruption. They were familiar with oppressive systems of exploitation. They too inhabited a compromised religious system. They experienced the full gamut of emotions that also marks our lives—joy and grief, conviction and doubt, connection and isolation. They, like us, were profoundly ordinary and everyday kinds of people, and God used them to change the world.


INTRODUCING THE 4ES


It's this shared everyday reality that makes the lives of Jesus and his first followers such powerful examples for us today. Too often the Western church has embraced a model of faith that relies on religious professionals to provide spiritual “products”—whether an uplifting worship experience or an inspiring sermon—to savvy religious consumers.³⁹

In contrast, we believe the new way we need is an old way rooted in the all-play empowerment of everyday people just like we see in the New Testament. When we look more closely at those ancient

stories, we see a pattern of reviving mission emerge. It's this pattern we've called the 4Es of Reviving Mission—encounter, explore, empower, and establish—that serves as the core paradigm of this book.

 **Encounter.** The reviving mission of Jesus was consistently rooted in *encounter with God*. Whether receiving calling (Luke 3:21-22), reflecting on the Scriptures (Matthew 5:1-7:29), retreating to pray (Mark 1:35), demonstrating the power of God to heal and deliver (Matthew 4:23-25), or consecrating himself through fasting (Luke 4:1-13), Jesus' life was saturated with the wonder that comes from an awareness of God's presence. From beginning to end, the reviving mission of Jesus was sourced in an ongoing encounter with the person of God.

 **Explore.** From that place of encounter, Jesus' regular practice was to *explore what God was doing* wherever he went. He described his own ministry in entirely responsive terms: "The Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing" (John 5:19). In each new community Jesus entered, he looked for people of peace willing to show him hospitality and open their lives to him as hosts for the kingdom of God (Luke 5:27-32). His parabolic teaching was intentionally designed to provoke curiosity and draw those who were hungry out of the crowd (Mark 4:10-25). At every turn, the reviving mission of Jesus was marked by exploring what God was already doing in the people he met and places he inhabited.

 **Empower.** As Jesus recognized the work of God around him, he began to *empower people* by calling them to be with him in discipleship and sent by him in mission. Through invitations like "Come . . . and you will see" (John 1:39), exhortations like "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19), and commands like "Go! I am sending you" (Luke 10:3), Jesus was intentional about calling others to join him and generous in entrusting them with authority as his

representatives. Whether through his disciples or transformed individuals like the Samaritan woman (John 4:7-42) and the Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5:19), Jesus' reviving mission was shaped by the ways he empowered everyday people to become ambassadors of the kingdom of God.



Establish. As he empowered others, Jesus was intentional to *establish rhythms of community* that would develop resilience. Whether by cultivating shared habits like prayer (Luke 11:1-4), fasting (Matthew 6:17), and retreat (Mark 6:31), or creating social habitats—distinct groups like the three (Matthew 17:1), the twelve (Mark 3:14), and the seventy-two (Luke 10:1)—Jesus embedded his way in the patterns of everyday life. In so doing, the reviving mission of Jesus grew as he established communal rhythms that would enable ongoing flourishing and fruitfulness.

Though we love the ways the *4Es* are rooted deeply in the everyday life of Jesus, what's remarkable is the way they emerge so consistently across the generations of everyday disciples who followed him.

THE 4ES AND JESUS' FIRST DISCIPLES

The sending of the seventy-two in Luke 10 provides a powerful example of the ways this *4E* framework was transferred to the lives of Jesus' earliest disciples. The story is sourced in *encounter* as Jesus exhorts them to pray and “ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers” (v. 2). As they go, he tells them to *explore* for a house where they would be welcomed (vv. 5-6) and commands them to receive hospitality from these people of peace (vv. 7-8). Further, Jesus *empowers* those he sends with authority (v. 19) and commissions them as ambassadors of the kingdom of God in word, deed, and power (v. 9). Likewise, he uses this opportunity to *establish* rhythms for ministry life as he sends them in partnership (“two by two” in v. 1), in dependence on those to whom they were

sent (v. 4), and with a clear emphasis on ministering in households (vv. 4-7). Indeed, it's not a stretch to imagine that these original people of peace in fact became indigenous leaders in a given village—households that became habitats for the kingdom of God.⁴⁰

THE 4ES AND THE EARLY CHURCH

Years later and in an entirely different context, we see this same pattern emerge in the story of Peter and Cornelius in Acts 10. Once again, the story originates in twin *encounters* with God as Cornelius and Peter both receive visions (vv. 3-8 and 9-16). Both respond with *exploration* as Cornelius sends a delegation to look for Peter in Joppa and Peter eagerly travels with that delegation to a new place to look for God at work. Upon his arrival, Peter finds a person of peace (Cornelius) who extends hospitality and whose entire household is primed to receive the good news (vv. 17-29). As Peter is testifying about Jesus, God *empowers* Cornelius and his household with the Holy Spirit and they are baptized in the name of Jesus (vv. 44-48). Throughout the story we see Peter practice some of the same communal rhythms that Jesus had *established* before him—he ministers in community (vv. 23, 45), he practices table fellowship (v. 48), and, as a result, the home of Cornelius the centurion is transformed into an outpost of the kingdom of God.⁴¹

THE 4ES IN PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

Finally, we see this same pattern repeated in the life of Paul through stories like the one found in Acts 16, where Paul and his companions minister in Philippi. Once again, the origin of the story is *encounter* with God, as Paul receives a vision of a “man of Macedonia” (vv. 6-10). When they arrive in Philippi, Paul and his companions *explore* what God is doing by visiting a place of prayer, where they meet not a Macedonian man but a Turkish woman



named Lydia. As a person of peace, Lydia responds to their message and welcomes Paul and his companions into her home (v. 14). In response, they *empower* Lydia by baptizing her (and the whole household where she has influence). Finally, despite the cultural tensions involved in doing so, Paul and his companions stay with Lydia and thereby *establish* a habitat for the gospel in Philippi where believers continued to gather (v. 40).⁴²

THE 4ES TODAY

Though these are only a few of the examples we'll examine through the rest of this book, seeing this pattern replicated through the New Testament narrative—especially across different generations of disciples and in contexts as radically distinct as rural Galilee and urban Philippi—grows our conviction that the 4Es are a durable model of reviving mission that can serve God's people today.

Though we'll be unpacking these concepts over the coming chapters, here's a simple summary of the 4Es that resonates with the scriptural narratives above and outlines a “new but old” way of reviving mission for our day.

Reviving mission is sourced in *encounter* with God's presence and movement around us. Encounter includes traditional spiritual disciplines such as prayer, worship, and Scripture, but it also involves supernatural experiences of calling, healing, and consecration, all of which lead us into deeper wonder and communion with God.

From that foundation of encounter with God, we *explore* what God has done, is doing, and will do in the people and places he's called us to. An essential part of exploring is using curiosity to identify “people of peace” who are receptive to the gospel of the kingdom, relationally connected to a network, and responsive to invitations of obedience.

As we recognize what God is doing in a community, we generously *empower* people. We help them grow their own connection to

God through the Holy Spirit given “without measure,” and we serve and send them into his calling on their lives.

Finally, we work alongside those we are empowering to *establish* rhythms of community that grow resilience and support flourishing. Whether habits (everyday practices that embed values) or habitats (the structures and systems that undergird the life of a community), communal rhythms amplify and sustain life over the long haul.

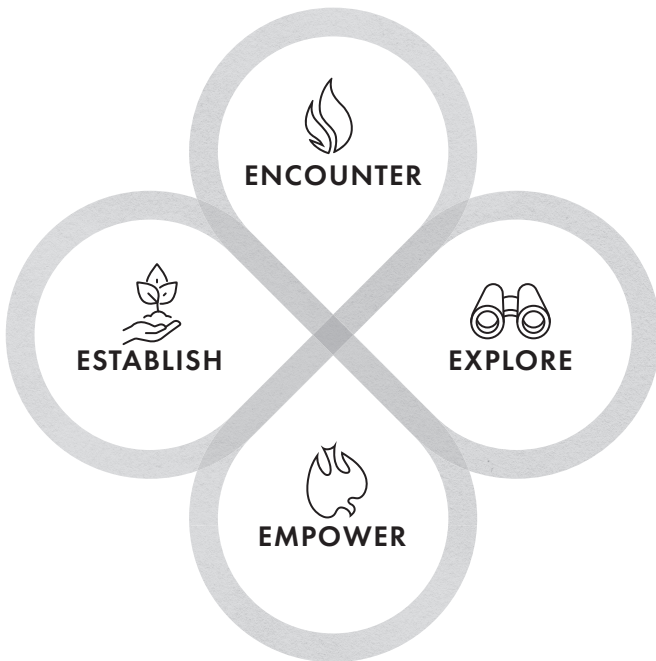


Figure 1.1. The 4Es of reviving mission

Over the last decade, God has used the 4Es to help hundreds of everyday people awaken to lives of reviving mission and start new faith communities in beautifully distinct contexts around the world. Our conviction is that they are an old way that can be a new way.

Though revivals start with outpourings of God’s Spirit, they are sustained when the dynamic movement of God is stewarded through agile, scalable structures—“wineskins” that enable what God is doing to be transferred from one community to the next. Our hope is that now, in light of the new season of revival that we believe is emerging all around us, the *4Es* might become a “new wineskin” to help steward the everyday movement of God that is being released in our day.

THIS BOOK IS FOR YOU

Regardless of your stage of life, what role you may (or may not) play in a faith community, or where you’re at in your spiritual journey, if you want to live a life of holistic faith, this book is for you. If you’re wary of expressions of “mission” that feel more like the empire than the kingdom, this book is for you. If you’re eager for a simple model of everyday mission to shape the life of your community, this book is for you. If you want to see God’s kingdom come in generative ways in your neighborhood or community, this book is definitely for you. And if all you’ve got is hunger—a longing for God and a desire to be awakened to his everyday movement all around you, this book is most certainly for you, because that’s who we are too.

WHO WE ARE

We never set out to be authors. Long before we ever tried to articulate these concepts in chapter outlines or podcast episodes, we were trying to embody these ideas in our lives. As practitioners, we know our first task is not to influence others but to follow Jesus, and it’s from that place of imperfect but earnest following that we write.

Together we carry several decades of experience starting new things and leading missional movements. While we got our start in the university world with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship,

we've also helped catalyze new work in local church settings and in different countries around the world. Though we've each completed graduate degrees, our heartbeat remains the grassroots work of everyday discipleship. We love empowering people to find their place in God's reviving mission—bearing witness to his goodness in their neighborhoods and families, across workplaces and campus quads.

Though we'll write collectively using “we,” “us,” and “our” throughout this book, here's some detail on who we are as individuals so you can have a sense of our contexts.

Linson is the associate pastor of METRO Church in Dallas, Texas, where he lives with his wife, Betina, and their two kids, Sophia and JT. He is passionate about serving and reaching the South Asian community in America and around the world. He loves training new leaders, leading teams, and envisioning a new future for the church.

Eric serves as the associate director for planting with InterVarsity/USA and director of groups ministry at his church, One Hope Benson. He loves to help everyday followers of Jesus start new expressions of Jesus' church, especially in overlooked places. He lives in Omaha, Nebraska, with his wife, Stacy, and their three kids, Memo, Elena, and Jonny.

Jon is a vice president for InterVarsity/USA, and he lives in Iowa with his wife, Stephanie, and their two kids, Elijah and Abigail. He is passionate about cultivating missional ecosystems and loves creating the confluence of vision, people, and systems needed to launch and sustain new things.

As missionaries who cut our teeth in the collegiate context, and now as parents of Gen Z children, we feel a sense of urgency to see the church be renewed and a growing sense of hope that God is doing something new in our day. We've tasted of his reviving

mission in our own lives and are honored to share some of what we've learned with you.

WHAT'S TO COME

In the next chapter, we'll introduce the second key paradigm of this book—a holistic missiology rooted in the person of God that shapes our postures and our practices. From there we'll work through each *E* over the course of two chapters—encounter (chapters three and four), explore (chapters five and six), empower (chapters seven and eight), and establish (chapters nine and ten). Finally, we'll offer a conclusion and benediction in chapter eleven.

For ease of access, after each couplet of *E* chapters, we'll provide a concise summary and a chart that synthesizes the key concepts we've covered, and we invite you to visit www.revivingmission.org for even more tools and resources.

In the pages that follow, we'll highlight how the *4Es* are a model for reviving mission that can awaken us to the everyday movement of God. We'll cultivate affection and joy by locating the *4Es* in the person of God. We'll illustrate how the *4Es* shape redemptive postures by telling stories of real people living beautiful lives of everyday mission. We'll provide practical tools to help you apply the *4Es* in your context so you can take your place in the new season God is releasing all around us.

Our hope is that by the end of this book you'll be equipped to recognize the everyday movement of God, inspired by his reviving mission, and moved to deeper worship of the one who is making everything new!

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