

Formation Pathway

Clarifying Statement for the Whole Community

I. Formation Approach

Our intentional formation curriculum for developing mature disciples. We believe maturity and growth is the byproduct of depth and intimacy with God. We try to open ourselves up to that intimacy through learning new **(1) Paradigms** of thinking, **(2) Practices** to explore, and **(3) People** to love. We will expand on each briefly below.

(1) Paradigms

We believe that we will never stop learning and discovering new things about God, His world, His people, and ourselves. We also believe that there is a clear New Testament precedent for church communities, thus disciples being grounded in a “semi-fluid” set of teachings. These are of course not an attempt to exhaust any one subject, but rather lay a foundation that can be built upon. In the first century, the term "Kerygma" referred to the core message of the Christian faith, centered on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, while "Didache" referred to practical teachings and instructions for Christian living as outlined in an ancient Christian document known as the Didache or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." This pathway is our attempt to translate the “Proclamation and Teaching of the Twelve Apostles” into our cultural church context.

We have found that deep and lasting change takes place over years. With that in mind we have developed a formation pathway that will take at minimum three years to complete. The internal structure of the pathway is a three part Cohort (101, 201, 301). The core content of these cohorts is outlined at the end of this document. Each cohort delivers instructional content that is then processed with others in community. In between each phase are various workshops on Rule of Life and Incarnational Mission. These are intended to support participants to take risks by engaging “new practices” and “new people.” In order to be accepted into the next phase of the Cohort participants must demonstrate that they have been taking risks in these two areas for an extended span of time.

(2) Practices

We believe that what we do does something to us. Thus, with Paul we can say the “renewing of the mind” begins with “the offering of [our] bodies as a living sacrifice” (Romans 12:1-2). There is a deep and wide history around spiritual practices. One that is being made increasingly accessible to us in the modern age through a myriad of resources. These resources are continually updated on our website and for our Rule of Life workshops. At the baseline we invite all community members to be thinking intentionally about their core values and habits as a way of seasonally reflecting on their formation. We think that a small Discipleship Group or Home Community is an ideal place to reflect on this in community a couple times per year.

As a broader Coram Deo Community we currently have a very simple communal Rule of Life. It involves participation in what ever public Gatherings we host as well as a set of practices. In this current season we host a monthly worship gathering, kids discipleship gathering, and a fireside chat. We also hold weekly and seasonal 24-7 Prayer rhythms. Beyond these gatherings we invite everyone in the community to slowly integrate six core practices into their life. Years ago while studying through Matthew’s Gospel as a community we noticed six things Jesus never

commanded, but he assumes his listeners are doing: prayer, community, fasting, generosity, sabbath, and scripture. We know there are many great practices beyond these, but we challenge people to establish these six “Jesus Assumptions” as the foundation for their Rule of Life.

(3) People

The final and most important area for growth and maturity is exposing ourselves to new people to love. From the greatest two commandments to cutting edge brain science, we know that fundamentally we become like whoever we love. Said more technically we become like the people we are most attached to. During the formation pathway we are constantly challenging participants to establish a weekly community rhythm with other follower of Jesus. We do not place people in home communities, rather we support them in starting one or naturally building relationships. In addition, we also challenge participants to be prayerfully pursuing friendships with people beyond their weekly community. In some seasons this will be very organic and in others it may take the form of an intentional invitation to a team, club, discipleship group, alpha course, etc.

It is our hope that everything we do is ultimately guiding us into the formation of deep relationships and meaningful attachments. Our gatherings, Trainings, and Communities all prioritize small sized spaces to foster meaningful attachments.

II. Cohorts & Workshops Overview

The exact content of these cohorts is always being reviewed and adapted based on discerned needs as well as community feedback. Much of the content is accessible on our website, but the real depth comes through the immersion within a learning community that knows each others stories. We run the 101 and 201 Cohorts every Fall and Spring. The 301 is run once a year across the Fall and Spring academic cycle.

101 Cohort: Exploring Kingdom Paradigms

- Session 1 - The Power of Story
- Session 2 - The God Story
- Session 3 - The Kingdom & The Fear of the Lord
- Session 4 - The Kingdom & The Unfailing Love of God
- Session 5 - Christology
- Session 6 - Missiology
- Session 7 - Pneumatology
- Session 8 - Ecclesiology
- Session 9 - Participation & Practice
- Session 10 - Final Dinner

Action: Take a risk and try new practices, vulnerable community, and mission

201 Cohort: Exploring Leadership Paradigms

- Session 1 - Defining Leadership
- Session 2 - Gospel Identity Again
- Session 3 - Lifelong Learners
- Session 4 - Stages of Discipleship

- Session 5 - Constellation of Relationships
- Session 6 - A Discipleship Paradigm
- Session 7 - New Testament Leadership Development
- Session 8 - Prayerful
- Session 9 - Family
- Session 10 - On Mission
- Session 11 - Missional Ecosystem
- Session 12 - Participation & Practice

Action: Take a risk and try new practices, vulnerable community, and mission

301 Cohort: Incubating Kingdom Expressions

- Foundations - Gospel Identity Again
- Track 1 - Establishing an *Oikos* and the Role of Shepherding
- Track 2 - Incubating a Redemptive Business
- Track 3 - Alleviating a Justice Need in Our City

Other Cohorts and Workshops

- Bible Cohort
- History of Racism Cohort
- Rule of Life Workshop
- Discipleship Group Workshop

III. Communal Rule of Life

A core value at Coram Deo is to remove the false division between secular or sacred life. One way we try to do this is by encouraging everyone to establish an intentional set of spiritual practices. In church history, this idea is referred to as a *Rule of Life*. It is a set of intentional habits and practices for a season ([Listen here](#) for an introduction). These might be new practices you add, remove, or reframe with more intentionality. It is the journey to become the good soil that bears good fruit. A *Rule of Life* safeguards this process by adding some structure to promote this growth. Here are the six foundational practices or “Jesus Assumptions” as we like to call them. To learn more and explore these check out our website to explore some teachings and resources.

PRAYER: 3 TIMES A DAY | MONTHLY & SEASONAL 24-7

COMMUNITY: 1 WEEKLY GATHERING | SEASONAL RETREATS

FASTING: 1 WEEKLY | 1 EXTENDED DURING THE SEASON OF LENT

GENEROSITY: 1 FINANCIAL | 1 CREATIVE

SABBATH: 1 WEEKLY | 1 ANNUAL EXTENDED

SCRIPTURE: 1 DAILY - READ | PRAY | EMBODY