

# Inspire Conference 2015

## The Apostolic DNA – Alan Hirsch

### 1. Jesus is Lord!

Practices:

- What's your Core message (see 1 Peter 3: 15)?

- Get to know Jesus

- (a) Read Luke's Gospel again. Make notes on how Jesus acts and what he says.  
What surprises you?

- (b) Watch a Jesus movie. Observe Jesus.

- Read John 5:17 – 20. What ideas do you pick up?

- Evaluate your congregation's beliefs and Core values over against Jesus' way.

- Practice Sabbath keeping – How does that feel? What can change if Sabbath keeping becomes a habit for you?

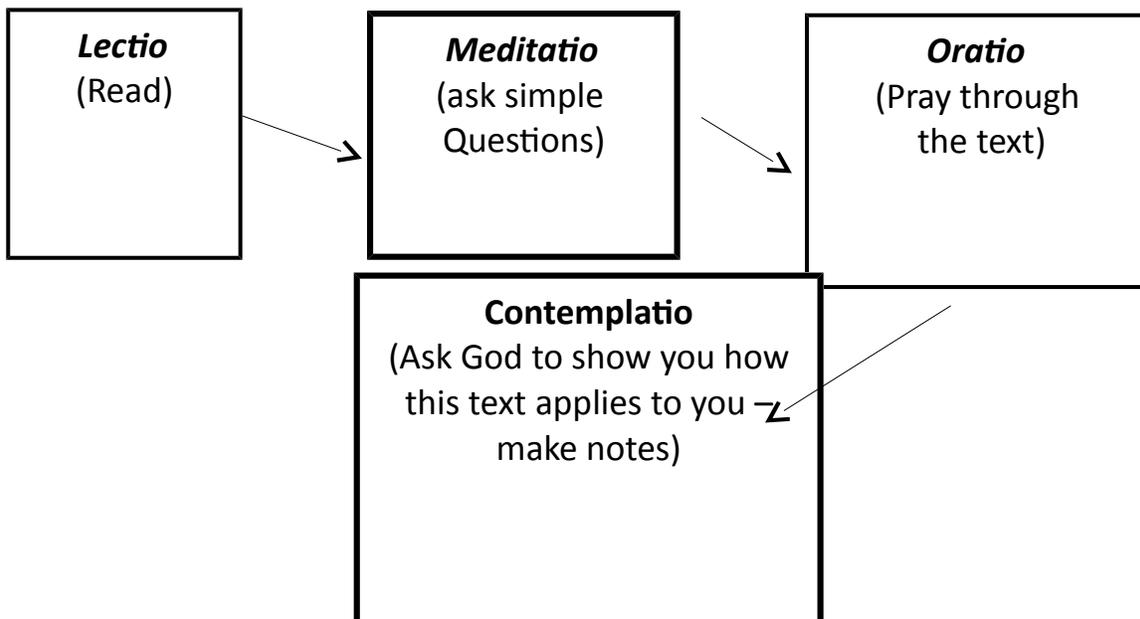
➤ **What are the most important challenges keeping you from considering Jesus as Lord?**

### 2. Disciple making

Practices:

- What would a congregation need to do to have a functioning discipleship school/clinic/method?

- Read scripture. Try every day for a week. Try the *lectio divina* model.



- Make it a habit to pray at meals. Pray before going to sleep. Find a friend to pray with.
- Get a project – as an individual, a family or a group. Do something for God. Convert words into actions.
- Give time or money. Take time or money away from something you like and give it to someone or some worthwhile cause. Thank God for giving you the courage to do this.

➤ What would it take to make your community good at disciple-making?

### 3. **The Missional – Incarnational Impulse**

Practices:

- Where do people “gather and connect” in your area (where you live)? Have a Bible Study there (coffee shop, shebeen, street corner, school etc.)
- Strike up a conversation with a stranger. Find out who they are, where they live, what they do. Or join a club, a society, some non-religious group. Get involved. Meet people.
- Invite someone for a meal, someone you don’t know well, not a close friend. Build a network of non-Christian friends.

- *Where are people gathering and experiencing community?*
- *Where are people finding meaning and a sense of identity?*
- *What are the current existential issues? Where are people expressing a longing for the divine?*
- *How does the Gospel address these issues? What is “Good news” for these people?*
- *Where is God already at work in the community? And how can we join with God?*
- *Given the above questions, what will church look like for this community?*

- Learn to tell a story about faith.

- *Excite curiosity through storytelling.*
- *Provoke a sense of wonder and awe.*
- *Be extraordinarily loving.*
- *Explore how God has touched their lives.*
- *Focus on Jesus.*

➤ What are the biggest challenges to becoming a missional congregation?

### 4. **Apostolic Environment**

Practices:

- Create a culture of “release” in your congregation. Give permission for people to dream and try new things.
  - Teach people how to be a missionary. Tell them about the Chinese Church. (Read books like *The Starfish and the spider: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations* by Ori Brafman and Rod A. Beckstrom) How can we make Church simple and reproducible?
  - How has God used your Congregation in the past? What are your achievements? Why do you exist as a congregation? What do you do really well?
  - Make a list of your groups gifts. How can they work together? Make connections.
- As a Church, what will we need to stop doing so as to concentrate on growing the Church? What will we need to let go of?

**5. Organic systems**

Practices:

<b>Organic Missional Movement</b>	<b>Institutional Religion</b>
Has pioneering missional leadership as its central role	Avoids leadership based on personality and is often led by an “aristocratic class” who inherit leadership based on loyalty.
Seeks to embody the way of life of the Founder.	Represents a more codified belief system.
Based on internal operational principles (mDNA)	Based increasingly on external legislating policies/governance
Has a cause.	Is “the cause”.
The mission is to change the future.	The mission shifts to preserving the past

<hr/> <p>Tends to be mobile and dynamic.</p>	<hr/> <p>Tends to be more static and fixed.</p>
<p>Decentralized network built on relationships.</p>	<p>Centralized organization built on loyalty.</p>
<hr/> <p>Appeals to the common person.</p>	<hr/> <p>Tends to become more and more elitist and therefore exclusive.</p>
<hr/> <p>Inspirational / Transformational leadership dominant; Spiritual authority tends to be the primary basis of influence.</p>	<hr/> <p>Transactional leadership dominant; Institutional authorizing tends to be the primary basis of influence</p>
<hr/> <p>People of the Way.</p>	<hr/> <p>People of the Book.</p>
<hr/> <p>Centered-set dynamic.</p>	<hr/> <p>Closed-set dynamic.</p>

- How is a “movement” different from an “institution”?
  - Just as an experiment, how could you restructure your Church as a movement?
  - Show on paper. What “titles” would change? Try the idea of “a network of meaningful relationships”.
  - Ask “the group” (cell group, Session or any group) to jointly discern something. See how it goes. Share a problem. Don’t give a solution. Let them work it out together.
  - Be brave and disband groups and ministries that no longer have life in them. Start new work only where there is a group that is passionate about it.
- What is different about structuring the Church organically?

## 6. *Communitas* not Community

Practices:

- What do you want to see your church become? Think creatively and courageously.
  - Who can you partner with to do something for your community.
  - What event can you create/organize where Christians can do something different (but fun) together?
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- How might challenges (or a shared epic adventure) bring people together?