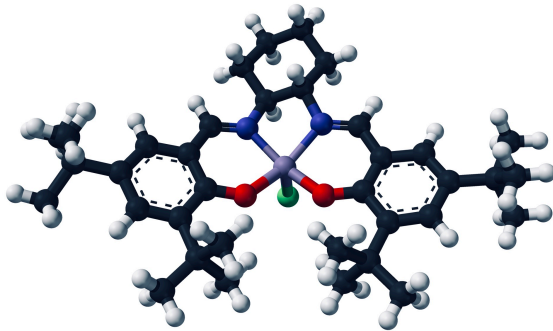


## Catalyst Sermon Series 2019



**Catalyst is a plan designed to spark conversations and build community around the Vision and Mission of Christ Covenant Church for a the replanting of a church at 3100 Covenant Road in 2019.**

**Our Mission is what we do, *Worship, Life, and Ministry Together*. Our Vision is what we long to see, *a movement of the gospel that will bring personal conversion and renewal, community formation, and generous lives serving others for cultural renewal in Columbia and beyond*. Each week we will be unpacking a portion of the vision enabling us to see why we do what we do.**

### A Gospel Movement

You can listen to our first two sermons in Catalyst Sermon Series, *Gospel Centrality* from Galatians 2:11-21, and *Stewarding a Gospel Movement* from 1 Peter 2:4-12 [www.ccotc.org/sermons](http://www.ccotc.org/sermons).

We learned that *Gospel Centrality* is what God does that effects everything we do. Gospel centrality has an order, a function, and a power. This past Sunday we learned that *Stewarding a Gospel Movement* is necessary for *Gospel Centrality* to be effective and not just “believed”. Stewarding a Gospel Movement requires God’s presence, his gifts, and his grace.

**Presence:** A Gospel Movement is not something the church can produce. A gospel movement takes place through the church, his covenant people. The gathered people of God, “a spiritual house” (1Pe.2:5), is where the presence of God dwells by his glory. The triune God brings about a movement of the gospel in his church. He works to bring movement, renewal, and reform by the dynamic working of the Spirit in the preaching of Jesus Christ through the whole counsel of his Word, the faithful observance of his sacraments, and in the nurture and discipline of God’s people. This movement of God in his church is necessary because the default mode of the human heart is works righteousness - we obey to be accepted, loved, and justified. Therefore without this gospel movement we crush personal and corporate life, but with gospel movement we see lives personally and corporately flourishing even in winter.

**Gifts:** A Gospel Movement is not dependent upon human ability and riches. A gospel movement takes place through the church that receives the gifts of Jesus Christ in the gospel. God the Father gave his only Son as our Prophet to speak the words of God to us, as our Priest to serve us by his compassion and sympathy, pray for us and give his life for us, and as our King to rule over us and serve us with all his gifts. The church is now the place of those gifts on the earth. The church living in Jesus Christ is a kingdom of priests and a royal priesthood proclaiming the wonder of God who has called them into the life of Jesus Christ (1Pe.2:5,9). God is sharing his gifts with the world through his church. His church tells of the wonders of him who has called and loved her. His church loves the world giving their lives with the sympathy and compassion of Christ and praying for her. His church is royalty cultivating the gifts God shares with her in her various callings to overflow in generous service to those in the world. The church stewards God’s gospel movement when she participates in the gifts of Jesus Christ.

**Grace:** A Gospel Movement is ignited by the grace of God. The church cannot stir herself up to love and good works that flow from the gospel. She must rehearse to herself, preach to herself, breath, drink, and eat the free, loving, and expensive grace of God. The church is chosen freely (1Pe.2:9). The church is God’s most treasured

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possession of all that he has (1Pe.2:9). The church, who had no name and who had received no mercy, has received mercy and is called the beloved of God through the costly life and death of Jesus Christ (1Pe.2:10; Hosea 2:23). The church will carry out a self loving, self protecting, judgmental life that slowly declines into her death, unless she is weekly stewarding the free, loving, and costly grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

The church is God's chosen living organization or institution. A church without the dynamic movement of the gospel are like a person on a life support machine. They may survive because of denominational affiliations, endowments, or a small overworked group of loyalists. But in the end they will die. Christ Covenant Church desires to be a movement of the gospel, a living institution stewarding the presence, gifts, and grace of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

***Coming Soon - Catalyst Conversations...be on the look out for sign ups in the Narthex at Barnwell St.***

## **New City Catechism**

What is a biblical or doctrinal catechism?

A carefully crafted biblically rich document to teach and train the church for growth. It is written in the form of questions and answers. Catechism is derived from the Greek *katechein*, which means, "to teach orally or to instruct by word of mouth." The most popular catechisms in the Reformed church are the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), and the Westminster Shorter and Larger Catechisms (1648). The Children's Catechism is a supplement to the Shorter Catechism. These continue to serve as doctrinal standards for our church today.

Why should we use catechisms for Christian growth?

Christian discipleship depends on a balance of biblical theology, practical ethics, and spiritual experience. Every Christian should practice reading and studying the Bible, prayer, fellowship, and sharing the wonders of God's grace in the gospel. However, catechesis is a form of study and discipleship that forms a community of discipleship in our homes and churches through memorization, recitation, and a dialogical process. This process also drives the truths we are learning deep into our own hearts functioning in our lives. J.I. Packer writes, because we have lost the practice of catechesis today, "superficial smatterings of truth, blurry notions about God and godliness, and thoughtlessness about the issues of living - career wise, community wise, family wise, and church wise - are all too often the marks of evangelical congregations today."

Why should we use or learn a new catechism?

Many today in the church treat the 'new' with suspicion or outright rejection. While there are many great ancient doctrinal standards and catechisms, they were once new. The historical church valued the writing of new catechisms for their own use in their own time. The Heidelberg Catechism and the Westminster Catechisms were written for the people of their times and place in the 16th and 17th centuries. So also, Martin Luther wrote a Smaller Catechism for the German people of his day, and John Calvin wrote the Genevan Catechism for French refugees living in Geneva. In the period prior to the War Between the States, pastor and theologian Charles Colcock Jones, wrote a catechism to use in his ministry to the hundreds of slaves living on plantations in Midway Georgia. These catechisms were all written to give the church a thorough exposition of the gospel built upon the doctrines of God, man, creation and providence. They were also written in their times to address the errors and false beliefs of the culture and times in which they lived. The final reason they were written was to form a particular people for a particular time that would express and reflect the likeness of Christ in character and communal life. Therefore, it is important that we write and learn new catechisms for our time and the culture in which we live. The doctrine that is true to a biblical theology held in these newer catechisms must be in line with our older ones. These unchanging doctrines will enable us to face errors, temptations, and challenges in our own culture and time.

How can I use the New City Catechism?

We can make use of the New City Catechism personally or more importantly in relationship with others. It is helpful to use at home each week, with a small group meeting together for prayer and study, or in a one on one relationship with another Christian or someone exploring the Christian faith. The question and answer method can be practiced together and each week the question and can be memorized together. For children there are songs that can be learned to help with memorization and learning the content into the heart. You can go here online to discover the **New City Catechism** or download the app. A book form is also available **here**.