

*Beyond the Local Church: How
Apostolic Movements Can
Change the World*

Available November 2015

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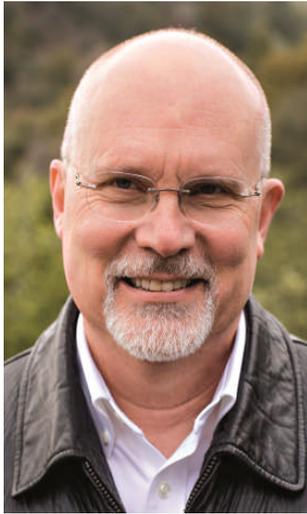
The gospel needs more than the local church.

Today, many missional people are living out God's call on their life by serving in apostolic movements – outside the local church. These apostolic movements include disciple-making ministries, social activism, relief and development, and advocacy.

In *Beyond the Local Church*, Sam Metcalf challenges the misconception that these apostolic structures are merely “parachurch” ministry. Metcalf argues that these movements are equally church, and that the local church must recognize the biblical and historical reality of the need for apostolic mission. When the local church and apostolic structures work together interdependently, they unleash gospel movements that thrive and prosper, bringing many to Christ.

Metcalf presents his case by:

- Validating the importance of what has been called “parachurch” ministry
- Challenging the idea that the local church is the only outlet for individuals to pursue their callings
- Giving biblical and missiological foundations for apostolic mission
- Clarifying the difference of vision and ministry between the local church and apostolic structures
- Describing characteristics of apostolic individuals
- Offering insight on how to engage and support those with apostolic vision
- Advising how to mobilize and develop people with apostolic calling
- Showing how God is at work through missional entrepreneurs around the world
- Emphasizing the structures needed to sustain apostolic ministry
- Revealing why apostolic mission is necessary to launch a gospel movement



Sam Metcalf is president of CRM, a worldwide ministry focused on pioneering new ground among the unreached and unchurched, bringing lasting transformation among the poor and mobilizing the church for mission. He also coordinates CoNext, a global partnership of CRM-like entities in eleven nations. Sam holds a master's degree from the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller Seminary and a doctorate from the Fuller School of Theology. He and his wife Patty live in southern California and have two children and four grandchildren.

Releasing Apostolic People to World-Changing Ministry

The local church is not the only place to serve God, argues Sam Metcalf in Beyond the Local Church. Some people are called to missional, apostolic work, and when the local church joins forces with these apostolic people, gospel movements are unleashed. Here Metcalf, president of CRM, a worldwide ministry focused on pioneering new ground among the unreached and unchurched, explains the importance of setting people free to apostolic mission and clarifies the distinction between apostolic and local church ministry.

What is the challenge of your book?

Sam Metcalf: The primary purpose of this book is to inspire and motivate those who should jump in wholeheartedly for ministry that is “beyond the local church.” There are wasted lives and unused talent sitting on the sidelines, waiting to be challenged toward God’s grand design for the nations, because they have been persuaded that the only legitimate venue to pursue such calling is through existing or traditional local churches.

Why is it important to recognize the validity of apostolic structures?

Metcalf: Movements of the gospel do not and will not happen without apostolic people set free to pursue the mission of God beyond local church structures. Movements happen when the church in its local form and the church in its apostolic, missionary form work interdependently as equals pursuing God’s missional agenda. One without the other is incomplete.

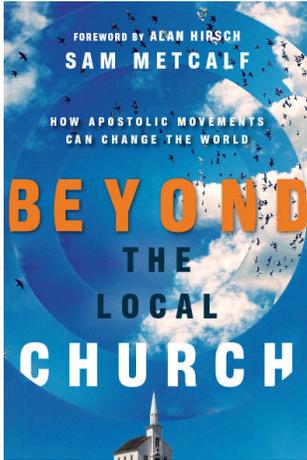
It takes both local church expressions and apostolic church structures for movements to be generated and sustained.

What is the role of the local church, distinguished from the role of apostolic structures?

Metcalf: The church in its local, cross-generational, parish, diocesan form has never been — theologically, historically, sociologically or missiologically — designed by God to cross barriers for the sake of the expansion of his kingdom. The local church does not start movements on its own. Rather, it is supremely designed for near-neighbor missionality and for being a supportive base for apostolic efforts to send and equip those who do cross such barriers.

Why is there a lack of understanding about the role of the local church and of apostolic mission?

Metcalf: In many instances, it’s a structural issue. It’s a lack of understanding of apostolic gifting and a lack of validation of apostolic structures where such gifting can be most



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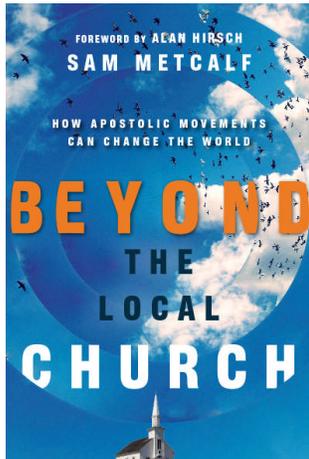
effectively lived out.

Apostolic structures are not aberrations. They are designed and purposed by God and are equally “church” with the church in its local form. The “supremacy of the local church” that gets propagated throughout the Protestant world is the aberration and is not biblically, historically or missiologically accurate.

The stunted, truncated ecclesiology that has plagued Protestantism since the Reformation continues to hinder our missional efforts when compared to what could be.

What would you tell someone who feels led to apostolic work?

Metcalf: If you have apostolic vision, passion and calling, you are not odd, an outcast or a rebel. Most likely you will need an apostolic structure for such calling to be adequately fulfilled, and that may be “beyond the local church.”



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A Provocative Breakdown of the Church and Apostolic Calling

“Beyond the Local Church is a critically dangerous read for anyone within earshot of Christendom. If Sam is wrong, nothing will change and the church will continue its downward slide into a remnant. If Sam is right, the church is uniquely and powerfully poised to reach the world. Great read, timely, and as usual, I find myself disagreeing on a few points but mostly muttering to myself, Dang it, I think he’s right!”

—**Hugh Halter**, author of *The Tangible Kingdom*

*“Many people today in our backyard, the inner city or across the world are not attracted to or being reached by our churches today. Have we been shortsighted in not seeing the potential sitting in the pew by not training, empowering and sending those whose gifts would be better used outside the traditional church? *Beyond the Local Church* brings an exciting vision for an unrestricted apostolic empowering and sending that matches the biblical apostolic age of the first century church. Read, listen and respond so the true potential of God’s calls is realized.”*

—**Judy TenElshof**, professor of Christian ministry and leadership, Talbot School of Theology, Biola University

“Sam Metcalf makes a compelling case for the biblical pattern of local churches and apostolic bands in dynamic partnership. The fulfillment of the Great Commission demands it. Along the way Sam illustrates these principles with stories and case studies gleaned from a lifetime of experience in world mission. His chapter on how to engage and release apostolic leaders is worth the price of admission!”

—**Steve Addison**, author of *Pioneering Movements* and *What Jesus Started*

“The discipling of nations requires the whole body of Christ to work together. Apostolic people and structures extend the gospel across geographic, cultural and linguistic barriers. Local churches nurture and mobilize disciples for ministry. Both are essential. As a global mission leader, Sam Metcalf makes a passionate call for missional synergy and inspires us to unleash new waves of entrepreneurs for the fulfillment of the Great Commission. This book is dynamite. Grounded in Scripture, its principles can spark movements that will change our world.”

—**Dean Carlson**, president, OC International

“Beyond the Local Church challenges the too common (but ultimately illegitimate) division between church and parachurch ministries. Sam Metcalf asks questions and explores



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categories that are helpful and thought provoking, regardless of whether someone ends up agreeing. This book is a necessary addition to the many conversations being had about how Christ's church should function from the margins of Western culture."

—**Mike Erre**, lead pastor, First Evangelical Free Church, Fullerton, CA

"In *Beyond the Local Church*, Sam Metcalf provides a fresh, inspiring and provocative look at how the body of Christ is meant to function. You won't agree with everything; neither did I. But that's exactly why you need to read it—to challenge your assumptions and expand your horizons on a topic too important to ignore."

—**Steve Moore**, executive director, nexLeader, Association of Biblical Higher Education, former president, Missio Nexus

"No matter what your ecclesiology may be, Sam Metcalf presents challenging and provocative ideas regarding the apostolic calling of the church and how this should inform the way we view and affirm apostolic organizations and structures that have often been considered 'para' church. This is a great read for those praying for gospel movements throughout the world."

—**Matthew Lee**, director of church planting programs, Fuller Theological Seminary

"This groundbreaking book challenges us to think differently and more biblically regarding local church and mission. We have become trapped in our thinking, history and culture about the human structures God uses. We have argued too often about the legitimacy of ministries and missions beyond the local expressions of church. For the sake of the gospel and the kingdom, Sam helps us break out into a new and deeper understanding of the apostolic and local. We must take seriously and practically the seminal teaching of this volume."

—**Jerry White**, international president emeritus, The Navigators