

PLANTEC

**Total Plan for
Evangelization
Complete**

Formative and Missional Reading
of the New Testament

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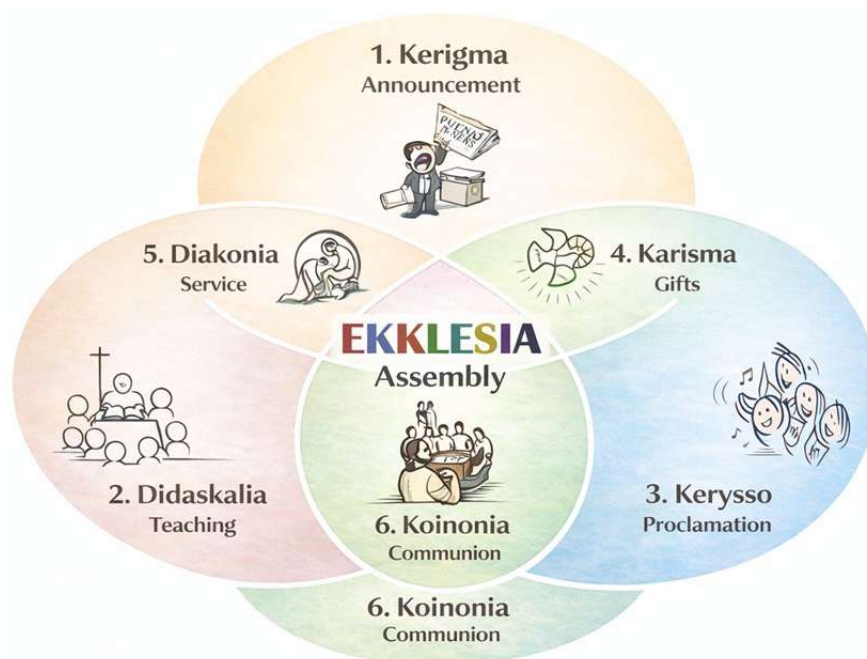
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Missional Hexagram



We were not called to preserve the Church, but to carry out the mission. Because the Church that is not sent out comes to a standstill, but the Church that is born of the Kerygma, educated in the Didaskalia, proclaimed in the Kerysso, ignited in the Charisma, made flesh in the Diakonia, and remains in the Koinonia, cannot be contained, but becomes an echo of God who sends to the furthest corners of history.

When the mission is integrated, the Church is liberated. Not to magnify its name, but to incarnate the Name above all names. Thus, the cycle closes only to reopen, because the Spirit does not conclude paths, but inaugurates futures, where Christ will be fullness in all things.

We measure the mission in order to obey it, not to possess it. And we obey the mission in order to share it, not to control it. Because the Church belongs to Christ, the mission belongs to God, and the movement belongs to the Holy Spirit. We are left with the joy and responsibility of simply being witnesses to his sending.

The hexagram gives us the map; the New Testament gives us the voice; the Spirit gives us the fire. But Christ gives us the sending. That is why the mission does not end here; it is just beginning in those who live it.

Presentation

The six components of life, of existence, and above all of the gospel of life, are as follows: focus on the positive, learn and teach, celebrate and rejoice, be charismatic, always serve, and stay connected.

I have found through my experience that the missional hexagram of the six components or fundamental axes, which I will present in this book, when integrated into the mind, breaks down boundaries, new possibilities emerge in thought, freedom is achieved, and the ideal of life is discovered in such an extraordinary way that nothing is impossible.

When the hexagram is applied, in addition to making an awake, lively, and conscious life possible, everything becomes easy, simple, and feasible. There are six components that drive the ideas that arise from the mind and the desires of the heart.

The Church could not have been the sign of the body of Christ if it were not for human understanding and symbolic reason. This project consists of six systematically integrated elements, which work in sync to complete the process of maturity in each

believer and the fruitful action of the Church. Here begins the discovery of the body of Christ and, at the same time, of our identity: *"For God is at work in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him"* (Philippians 2:13).

Evangelism is the proclamation and experience of the components of the kingdom: proclamation, teaching, worship, fruitfulness, service, and fellowship. The disciples were sent into the world, just as Jesus was sent by the Father (John 17:18). Therefore, the Church is the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23), just as Christ is the visible body of the Word of God: *"Whoever has seen me has seen the Father"* (John 14:9).

The apostle Peter summarized Jesus' life with the following words: *"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with him"* (Acts 10:38); a life of service empowered by God.

Therefore, Jesus' message was not to promote his fame (Luke 4:14), nor his life, nor his deeds (Matthew 9:30), but rather the establishment of the kingdom of heaven (Luke 22:29-30) and his reign in the world: *"Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ"* (Acts 2:36). Therefore, we must accept Jesus.

In fact, evangelization consists in continually proclaiming and spreading the message of Jesus. Evangelization is the true witness of believers in Christ (John 15:26-27). Jesus was a witness to his message, and those who love his testimony are the only ones who recognize him: *"Then Pilate said to him, 'So you are a*

king? Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice'" (John 18:37). Jesus has all authority and power.

The lost body is a living structure, made up of elements that are precisely placed. That is why the body of Christ is compared to a building, because using the same elements in the way they are structured, they form what the architect wants to do:

With bricks, sand, cement, iron, water, and wood, you can build a bridge, a castle, a school, or a house. The same is true of the body. If the organs that make up the body are not all in their proper place, they form deformed bodies and phenomena of abnormal proportions. It would be a lost body. Therefore, we must keep God's order and purpose in structuring the Church.

The kingdom of heaven has an order designed by God. There is an entrance (Matthew 4:17); there is a change (Romans 12:2) in the meaning and sense of perceiving God, in order to do His will with our spiritual mind (Romans 14:17). Then comes the beginning of the kingdom of God, which consists of cultivating the inner life, which is not an event but a process, achieved by keeping His Word (John 14:23).

The kingdom of heaven is the fruit of continuous work: "*And Jesus answered them, 'My Father is working until now, and I am working'" (John 5:17). The kingdom of God is built among us, like a crop. , weeds are removed and destroyed, the soil*

between fertile and arid is turned over, then the seed is sown, between good and bad, and then we must wait, because God works in secret, as Jesus explained through the parables of the growing seed and the mustard seed (Mark 4:26-34).

Because when it comes to evangelization, it does not only refer to a certain availability or willingness to serve God's work, but to giving oneself completely to the evangelizing mission, understanding and applying the following six components of the kingdom: *Kerigma*, *Didaskalia*, *Kerysso*, *Karisma*, *Diakonia*, and *Koinonia*. The Church is evangelizing by nature, and to evangelize is to form and send disciples for the transformation of the world (Discipline ¶120).

Introduction

In 1995, during various continuing education meetings, I began to notice that some speakers used certain Greek terms to enrich their teachings, particularly when quoting or explaining biblical passages. Moved by academic, biblical, and spiritual curiosity, I began to record those words, inquire into their meanings, and study their linguistic and theological nuances.

What began as a personal exercise in note-taking soon turned into a process of discovery: the biblical message began to reveal itself to me with a structured, almost progressive clarity, as if a veil were being lifted. First there were two terms, then four, until I finally identified six concepts that, over time, became the cornerstones of my theological understanding and ministerial practice: *kerygma*, *didaskalia*, *kerysso*, *charisma*, *diakonia*, and *koinonia*.

After joining the United Methodist Church, I noticed that four of these terms were already present in the language and ministerial practice of the denomination. Later, I found in the writings of John Wesley the centrality of *charisma* in the manifestation of the Holy Spirit and of *koinonia* in the organizational

dynamics of the Church. This recognition led me to integrate the six components or fundamental axes into a ministerial project that I initially called "Our Ministry," a conceptual framework from which I wrote five books on the subject, another dedicated to missional spirituality, and one more oriented toward the experience of faith in society.

My aspiration was to complete the articulated vision of the six elements in a single integral cycle. It was then that the New Testament became my roadmap: first in an embryonic form, then with greater clarity, until it consolidated into a cyclical and formative theological and missional model.

In that process, I also felt compelled to document the stories of local churches through testimonial videos. To facilitate this missionary stage, I purchased a recreational vehicle (motor home/RV) that allowed me to visit different congregations and record their community stories. In June 2025, I resigned from my pastoral position, and between July and September of that same year, I devoted myself to the planning phase of the project. On October 14, 2025, I began the intensive development stage, which culminated on December 19, 2025, after weeks of uninterrupted work, day and night.

The result of this spiritual, theological, and investigative journey is the project I present today as the Missional Hexagram of the Six Dimensions of Mission, a model that articulates Christ's formative and sending purpose through six missional axes, mapped in correspondence with the 27 canonical books of the New Testament.

Various authors have proposed explanations for the fourfold configuration of the New Testament canon. For some biblical scholars and theologians, the figures are linked to the text of Ezekiel 1:5-14, where Luke is associated with the ox because he begins with the presence in the temple. Mark is associated with the lion because he begins in the desert. Matthew is associated with the man because of the genealogy. John is associated with the eagle because he has a deeper insight into life, work, and events. Others compare the four Gospels to the four cardinal points, noting that they cover the entire earth. There are also those who identify the four Gospels with their cultural audiences of the time: Matthew for the Jews, Mark for the Romans, Luke for the Greeks, and John for the Hellenists.

According to biblical criticism, in the analysis of his books, symbolic patterns are identified in the use of the number seven in the Pauline letters, seven originals, seven attributed to his authorship, and seven universal ones. In Revelation, the figures of seven churches, seven bowls, and seven trumpets represent God's judgment and the call to repentance through prophetic messages of the end times. Both the trumpets and the bowls refer to Jesus' call for believers to give reasons for their faith before the end. The seven churches represent the faith communities of all the churches in the world.

However, to the best of my knowledge, no previous author or hermeneutical model had integrated the New Testament canon, based on the internal logic of six missional dimensions, into a single theological, formative, and diagnostic system. This is my original contribution, in that it is a tool for

diagnosing the state of the local church. This integration is expressed as follows:

1. *Kerigma, John: proclamation of Christ and the Gospel.*
2. *Didaskalia, Matthew: Christian formation and education.*
3. *Kerysso, Luke: proclamation and preaching of the message.*
4. *Karisma, Acts of the Apostles: manifestation and activation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.*
5. *Diakonia, Mark: practical service and social commitment.*
6. *Koinonia, Letters, and Apocalypse: unity, communion, and organization of the body of Christ.*

As these six dimensions converge in a single integral cycle, a seventh implicit figure emerges: the Church, not as an isolated axis, but as the living and dynamic fruit of missional integration. The mission forms, the Spirit guides, the community embodies, and the Church is sent forth.

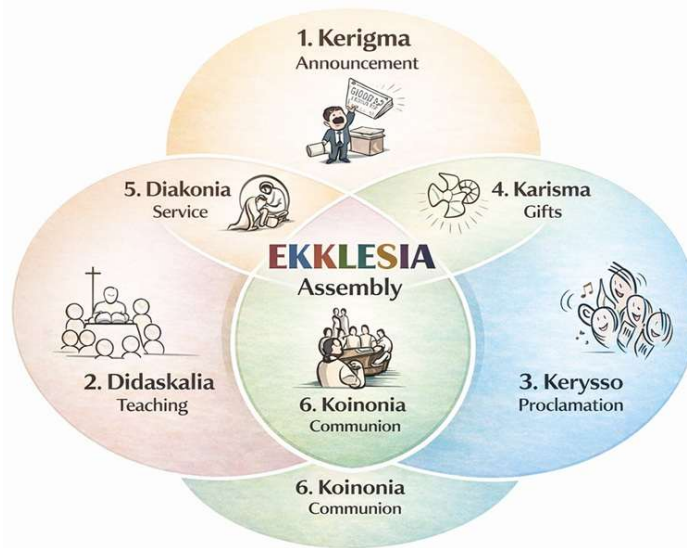
The mission to form and send disciples

The mission arises from Jesus' deliberate intention to send his disciples into the world: "go, make disciples, baptize, teach, witness, shepherd" (Matthew 10:5-16; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 10:1-20; John 20:21). The divine mission is the foundation of this book. Jesus trains disciples to embody his life, live his teachings, and participate in his mission to transform the world (Discipline ¶120).

Jesus' design was clear: to reveal the Father, *kerygma* (John 1:18). To form disciples, *didaskalia* (Matthew 28:18-20). To show his sovereignty, *kerysso* (Luke 4:18-19). To serve with courage, *diakonia* (Mark 10:45). To bear witness, *charisma* (Acts 1:8). To organize his assembly, *koinonia* (Ephesians 2:19-22). The goal is to extend the kingdom βασιλείας, *basileías* (Matthew 24:14) through reconciliation, καταλλαγῆς, *katallagês* (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). The plan is to guide believers to believe and to participate in formation, accompaniment, and sending.

The mission of the Church is understood when six biblical dimensions are put into action in an integral way, drawing on the teaching of the New Testament: *kerygma*, *didaskalia*, *kerysso*

, *charisma, diakonia, and koinonia*. Each dimension or fundamental axis expresses an aspect of Jesus' original intention and describes how the Church is formed by the Word, guided by the Spirit, and sent into the world to spread the gospel.



These six dimensions are not invented categories; they emerge from the way the New Testament presents the missionary process, from the proclamation of Jesus to the full life of the Church. Through careful reading, we discover that the Christian mission advances in an integral movement, composed of six fundamental axes:

1. Kerygma is the impulse to proclaim, and John reminds us of the burning fire of first love, the encounter that ignites the news of Jesus and his mission. It is the revelation of the Son who calls us to believe and proclaim what we have seen and heard.

2. **Didaskalia** is the process of teaching that forms obedient students. Matthew's position is the teaching that disciples and orders life in the Kingdom.

3. **Kerysso** is the preaching that enlivens and strengthens the people of God. Luke reflects the proclamation that summons, challenges, and calls to repentance.

4. **Karisma** is the gift that drives and enables mission. The Acts of the Apostles recounts life in the Holy Spirit that trains and empowers for mission.

5. **Diakonia** is the service that touches the needs of others. Mark recounts the service that embodies the gospel and brings the Kingdom to the needs of the world.

6. **Koinonia** manifests the unity of faith. The Letters and Revelation exhort the assembly of the faithful in a community to sustain, integrate, and send forth its members from the body formed and guided by Christ.

These six dimensions form a complete map of the mission. They are not linear stages, but interdependent realities that must be kept in balance. When a church emphasizes only one of them, for example, proclamation without teaching, or teaching without service, or service without life in the Spirit, its mission loses strength, clarity, and depth. On the other hand, when these dimensions are integrated, the Church lives out its calling with biblical fullness.

This six-axis model allows leaders to diagnose the missional health of their church, identify strengths and areas for

growth, and establish a path of renewal. But more than a method, it is an invitation to return to the Word, to see what Jesus did, what he taught, what he proclaimed, how he served, how he formed community, and how he sent his disciples.

Measuring mission is not quantifying God's work, but recognizing his footprints. It is observing where we are and where the Spirit is calling us. It is helping the Church to look at the Word with new eyes, discern its six dimensions, and allow itself to be guided by the axes of mission, in order to faithfully fulfill Christ's mandate in our time.

This approach to the six dimensions of mission is by no means a final truth, but rather a tool for dialogue and discernment. May each reader take from it what builds up their faith, enlightens their ministry, and strengthens their passion for the mission Jesus entrusted to us. May the Lord, who called his Church to bring the Gospel to every person and every culture, guide us as we move forward on this journey of rediscovering the Church's mission.

As far as the current state of pastoral literature is concerned, our model of the six dimensions of mission does not copy or derive directly from any previous framework, which allows us to truthfully affirm:

This book presents an original proposal for a missional reading of the New Testament in six dimensions.

Missionary structure of the New Testament

This project shows that the six dimensions of mission form the pastoral and missionary structure of the New Testament. This six-component scheme reflects the mission of Jesus, which is born of divine revelation. At no point are these axes intended to form an institution, foundation, or human enterprise, since the six-dimensional model—*kerygma*, *didaskalia*, *kerysso*, *charisma*, *diakonia*, and *koinonia*—arises directly from the biblical design.

It is not a structure imposed on the text, but a pastoral reading that emerges from the logic of the New Testament itself. Each dimension reflects a fundamental emphasis in the life of the Church, and together they form a comprehensive framework that describes how God advances his work in the world.

1. *Mission begins with revelation and proclamation (kerygma).* The gospel is not a doctrine or an ethic. It is the voice of Jesus driving the mission: Mission is born from hearing the voice of Jesus (John 10:27; 10:27; 12:26). The sending is explicit: "*As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world*" (John 17:18; 20:21). Missionary power is breathed by Jesus and

confirmed by the Holy Spirit (John 20:22). The purpose is to go and bear fruit (John 15:16). The church continues the movement of sending from the Father to the Son and from the Son to the disciples (John 20:21; 17:18), and the disciples are faithful witnesses: *"He first found his brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah,' which translated means Christ"* (John 1:41). It is an encounter with Christ that opens up missionary work: *"What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you"* (1 John 1:1:3).

2. *The mission continues with formative teaching (didaskalia).* Jesus not only preached, *"Go and proclaim"* (Matthew 10:7), but also educated, *"Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you"* (Matthew 28:20). Teaching produces permanent roots and fruit in the believer. *Didaskalia* forms disciples: the Sermon on the Mount, the parables, the ethics of the Kingdom, apostolic instruction, and the building up of the church. Mission requires revelation and formation, proclamation and obedience. That is why *didaskalia* is an indispensable theological dimension.

3. *Mission is expressed through public proclamation (kerysso).* The New Testament emphasizes public proclamation. Jesus *"preached"* (*kerysso*) with authority (Luke 4:18). The apostles were sent out: *"and commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God has appointed as judge of the living and the dead"* (Acts 10:42). Preaching is essential to the spread of the gospel (Romans 10:14-17). *Kerysso* is the prophetic voice of the Kingdom: it summons, confronts, directs, and invites response. Faith grows through the public proclamation of transforming truth.

4. *Mission is driven and sustained by the Spirit (karisma).* The disciples cannot move forward “until they are clothed with power” (Luke 24:49). Mission is guided, empowered, directed, and accomplished by the Holy Spirit. Spiritual gifts (*karisma*) are abilities given for the work of the gospel (1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12). Christian mission is made possible by power, discernment, wisdom, courage, and spiritual guidance. Mission is divine in origin, means, and results.

5. *Mission is embodied in service (diakonia).* Jesus not only taught and preached: he served. His entire life was diakonia (Mark 10:45). The New Testament presents service as a tangible manifestation of the gospel (Galatians 5:13; James 2:14–17; 1 Peter 4:10). Diakonia is the dimension that connects the gospel with the real needs of the world. It expresses the incarnation, the compassion of the Kingdom, the justice of God, and divine mercy. Without service, mission remains incomplete.

6. *Mission is lived and reproduced in community (koinonia).* Mission is a team effort. The New Testament presents the Church as a body (1 Corinthians 12), as a family (Galatians 6:10), as a spiritual home (1 Peter 2:5), and as a sent people (John 20:21). *Koinonia* is where the disciple is formed, sustained, and sent. The community builds up, corrects, encourages, sends, sustains, and celebrates. Without *koinonia*, the other dimensions are scattered, since it anchors the mission in ecclesial identity and is God's instrument for mission.

7. *The six dimensions are a movement of unity.* They do not compete with each other; they complement each other:

Proclamation without teaching does not form. Teaching without proclamation does not call people together. Proclamation without the Spirit does not transform. Power without service is distorted. Service without community is exhausted. And community without mission is closed. These six dimensions arise from Christ himself, are empowered by the Holy Spirit himself, and are expressed in the Church itself. The six dimensions together, continually active, offer a comprehensive framework for understanding the fully biblical mission. This system of *six dimensions* allows us to see mission as a complete work in Christ, alive through the Spirit and shared by the Church today.

Now what we must do is:

Reading to know God: In the Bible, we discover God's character, His promises, and His plan of salvation. Meditating on the Gospels and the apostolic letters leads us to deepen our relationship with Jesus. A practical exercise is to devote time each day to reading and reflecting on the Word.

Understanding to transform your life of faith: Studying the Word and reflecting on its practical meaning and message leads believers to understand biblical content. That is why it is important to ask questions, discuss, and learn in community in order to deepen your faith. An effective exercise is to attend and participate in Bible study or discipleship groups.

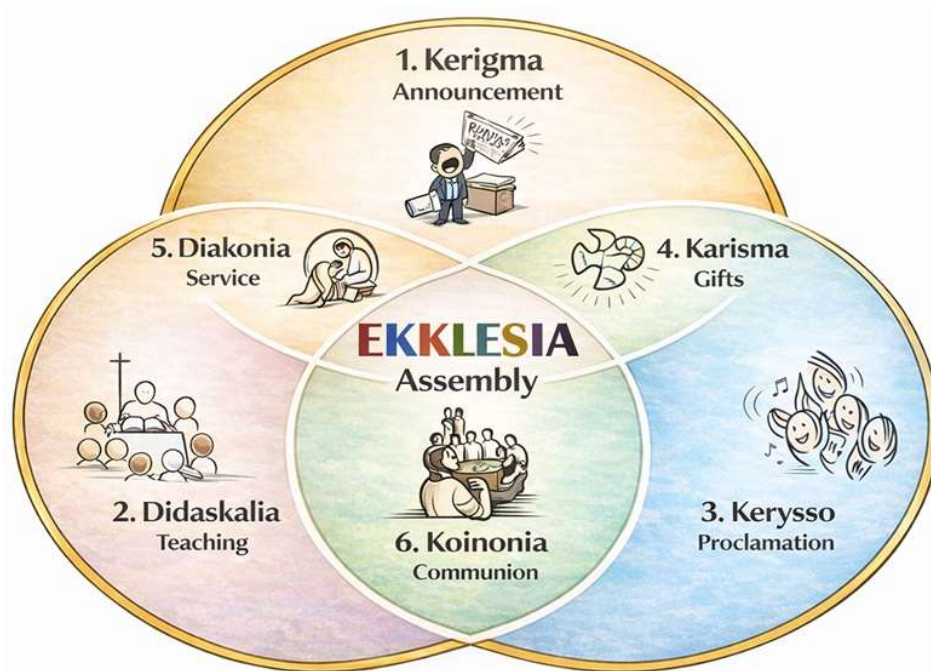
Teaching to witness to God according to His Word: Applying biblical teaching to daily life helps us form a healthy ethic, make decisions, establish relationships, and provide

timely service. We must allow the Word to transform the way we think, feel, and act. A practical exercise is to use biblical principles to resolve conflicts or guide our behavior at work and in the family.

Having a broad knowledge of the biblical message leads us to actively participate in the mission of evangelization in our environment, which motivates us to share the gospel through words and actions. Understanding the Bible makes it easier for us to teach others the Word of God, make disciples, and serve the community. A practical exercise is to invite someone to a Bible study, help those in need, and testify about our experience with Christ to new believers.

In summary, the content of the New Testament gives us tools to know God personally, deepen our faith, and understand the truth of the gospel, allowing us to transform our lives according to His Word. We can see more opportunities to share the message of salvation and participate in God's global mission. In short, reading, understanding, living, and teaching the Bible serves to make disciples and fulfill God's overall plan for the world.

Total Plan for Complete Evangelization - PLAN TEC -



The Total Plan of Complete Evangelism, Plantec, refers to the comprehensive vision with which God leads the mission of proclaiming the gospel. Plantec encompasses the entire biblical message of the plan of salvation, proposed by God through Jesus Christ, including all people, in all dimensions of life and at all stages of the process of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

The Total Plan of Complete Evangelism describes God's missional purpose (*missio Dei*) that integrates the entire revelation of the gospel (creation, fall, redemption, restoration). The entire ministry of the church (proclamation, service, discipleship, justice). The entire human being (mind, heart, will, relationships, and vocation). The entire mission of Christ (incarnation, cross, resurrection, sending of the Spirit, and establishment of the Kingdom). It is a vision where evangelism is not just "proclaiming a message," but accompanying people toward a transformed life under the lordship of Christ.

We call the Total Plan of Complete Evangelization, *Plantec*, the divine strategy, revealed in Scripture and continued by the Church, through which God seeks to reach and restore human beings in all their dimensions. This plan integrates the proclamation of the gospel, spiritual formation, community transformation, and the manifestation of the Kingdom of God in every culture and in every place.

Complete evangelism is part of God's total plan through the work of the Holy Spirit, who convicts, regenerates, transforms, and sends. It is not only about communicating truths, but about cooperating with the Spirit in the formation of disciples who embody the gospel in their daily lives.

Plantec is the church's participation in God's global mission, encompassing the proclamation of the gospel, compassion for the needy, the denunciation of evil, and cultural transformation. It involves the whole Church, bringing the whole gospel to the whole world and to every person:

1. *The whole gospel: salvation of the soul and integral restoration.*
2. *To all people: cultural, social, or generational.*
3. *For all of life: ethics, vocation, relationships, and community.*
4. *To the whole world: personal, local, global, and structural mission.*

Based on Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 1:9-10: The Total Plan of Complete Evangelism is the fulfillment of the resurrected Christ's purpose to make disciples of all nations, bringing His power, presence, and teaching to every people and every sphere of life, to bring all things under His lordship.

The Total Plan of Complete Evangelism is a biblical vision of integral mission. It is full evangelization within God's total plan. It is the whole gospel for the whole person. It is God's total plan in evangelism. It is God's mission and it is the total plan of complete evangelism.

The Total Plan of Complete Evangelism is God's integral mission to bring the whole gospel to all people and in all dimensions of life. The theme is evangelism as an integral, global, and complete process within God's purpose.

The theme of Plantec is the theological and missional understanding of God's total project to proclaim, incarnate, and extend the gospel at the personal, community, and global levels:

The evangelization is not an isolated activity of the Church, but the participation of the entire community of believers in God's total plan, whose purpose is to bring the integral gospel—evangelism, proclamation, discipleship, transformation, and service—to all

people, in all cultures, and in all dimensions of life, thus fulfilling God's global mission in the world.

Wholeness of the gospel: Evangelism is not limited to individual conversion, but encompasses mind, heart, will, and community. It includes proclamation, teaching, discipleship, justice, and social transformation.

Universal reach to all people: without cultural, ethnic, social, or generational distinctions.

Every place: from the local church to the nations, reflecting the expansion of God's Kingdom.

Church participation: Every believer has an active role in the mission. Complete evangelism involves the community in prayer, service, witness, and discipleship.

Biblical and theological basis: Plantec is grounded in the *Misio Dei*: God is the author of the mission (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 1:9-10). The Church cooperates with the Holy Spirit to fulfill God's overall plan. Plantec aims to bring about global and cultural transformation: Complete evangelization seeks to ensure that the lives of individuals, communities, and social structures reflect the values of the Kingdom of God.

Whole evangelism is the Church's integral participation in God's overall plan, which seeks to bring the whole gospel to all people, so that their lives may be transformed by the Word, as well as their cultural environment, thus fulfilling Jesus' purpose in his global mission of the Kingdom.

Complete evangelization is motivating believers to read the Bible, understand its message, and apply its teachings to their own lives so that they can practice and share the whole gospel with clarity and conviction, actively participating in God's overall plan for complete evangelization to be implemented.

Reading the Bible for the purpose of exposing and knowing the whole gospel: Constant reading allows believers to know God's entire plan: creation, fall, redemption, and restoration. This relates to Plantec's thesis because only by knowing the whole gospel can one participate in whole evangelism.

Understand the Bible for discernment and personal application of its message: Understanding allows us to discern how to apply the gospel in our own lives and in mission. Plantec's thesis emphasizes that evangelism is comprehensive; it is knowledge with concrete application to life.

Teaching and sharing the Bible is evidence of participation in the mission: Sharing the message of salvation is the practical way to fulfill God's overall plan. Teaching others reinforces the cycle of reading, understanding, living, sharing, and making disciples, which is at the heart of complete evangelism.

The purpose of this study is to equip believers to read the Bible with enthusiasm, deeply understand its comprehensive message, and acquire the ability to teach and share the gospel clearly, thus actively participating in God's overall plan for the complete evangelization of the world.

Read, understand, and teach the Bible to participate in wholehearted evangelism according to God's plan.

Whole evangelism is not simply a command; it is the Church's participation in God's overall plan to reach all people and transform all of life under the lordship of Christ. To fulfill this purpose, every believer needs to know God's Word deeply, understand its comprehensive message, and apply it in their daily life.

Reading the Bible with enthusiasm allows us to discover God's redemptive plan in its entirety, understanding how creation, the fall, redemption, and restoration connect with our lives and mission in the life of the Church. Understanding biblical teachings strengthens our faith and discernment, preparing us to teach and share the Christian message of salvation with clarity.

In this way, reading, understanding, and teaching the Bible not only enriches the believer's personal life, but also enables them to actively participate in wholehearted evangelism, fulfilling God's purpose of bringing the whole gospel to every person in every culture and context.

This study therefore seeks to motivate and equip believers so that the Word of God becomes the foundation of their lives and the driving force of their mission in the world.

Whole evangelism is more than a mandate; it is the participation of every believer in God's total plan to bring the whole gospel to every person. To be part of this mission, we need to

read the Bible with enthusiasm, understand its message, and share it clearly. God's Word reveals Christ's redemptive plan in all its breadth and enables us to live and teach the gospel in a comprehensive way.

By living out the gospel in its entirety, we not only transform our lives, but we also become active instruments of the Kingdom, bringing Christ's salvation and hope to those around us.

This study seeks to motivate and equip believers to make the Bible the source of their faith, their guide in life, and their tool for fulfilling God's mission in the world.

The command to make disciples in Matthew 28:18–20: "*Go and make disciples...teaching them*" and Acts 1:8 with the power of the Holy Spirit to witness, defines the role of the Church, which is for every believer to participate in the mission of the community as a vehicle for teaching and transformation.

Complete evangelism, as participation in God's plan, is the call and invitation for believers to be readers, students, and teachers of the Bible: "*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others*" (2 Timothy 2:2).

Disciple formation according to the Total Plan of Complete Evangelization

Relating each of the six dimensions of mission to a specific book of the New Testament is very interesting for those who seek applied teaching from the Bible and not just theological theory. It is very attractive to believers who want missionary action and practical spiritual formation rather than formal academic studies.

In this part of Plantec, a complete proposal is presented, ready for use in every local church or discipleship group. It is organized by modules (one for each component of Plantec), with objectives, biblical texts, content, dynamics, and practical application.

The proposal is to help with the formation of disciples committed to the integral mission of Jesus: to proclaim, teach, preach, witness, serve, and send, living the Gospel with passion in all dimensions of life.

General structure of the program:

Suggested duration: *6 weeks (one per module) or six intensive sessions.*

Modality: *In-person or virtual.*

Method: *Biblical exposition + group reflection + missionary practice.*

Goal: *For each participant to become a disciple capable of reading, understanding, applying, and teaching the Bible, following the model of Jesus.*

Module 1:

Kerygma - the encounter with Jesus

Central theme: The impulse to PROCLAIM the living Christ.

Base text: 1 John 1:1-3.

Objective: To rediscover the personal experience of encountering Jesus as the source of proclaiming the Gospel.

Content:

- *What is the kerygma: the original proclamation of the Christian faith.*
- *Testimony of the apostles: "We saw him, we heard him, we touched him."*
- *Proclamation as the fruit of a personal encounter with Christ.*

Activity: Personal testimony: "My encounter with Jesus."

Application: Each participant writes down and shares their story of faith in a brief three-minute testimony.

Module 2: Didaskalia - Christian knowledge

Central theme: The mission to TEACH the Word.

Base text: Matthew 28:20.

Objective: To understand that discipleship involves teaching totality, the truth of Christ with faithfulness and love.

Content:

- Jesus, the Teacher par excellence.*
- Teaching as a way to form Christian character.*
- Methods of biblical teaching in the community.*

Activity: Group reading of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7).

Application: Prepare a short Bible lesson to share with the group.

Module 3: ***Kerysso - the message of the kingdom***

Central theme: *The call to PREACH the Good News.*

Base text: *Luke 4:18-19 and Luke 4:43-44.*

Objective: *To awaken enthusiasm for proclaiming the Gospel in its entirety with conviction and joy.*
the Gospel in its entirety with conviction and joy.

Content:

- *The preaching of the Kingdom on the lips of Jesus.*
- *The transforming power of the Gospel.*
- *Preaching with words and with life.*

Activity: *Dramatization of one of Jesus' parables.*

Application: *Write a brief sermon or a short message of five minutes.*

Module 4: ***Karisma - the believer's testimony***

Central theme: *The responsibility to TESTIFY with integrity and conviction and conviction.*

Key verses: *Luke 24:48, and Acts 1:8.*

Objective: *To understand that the disciple's testimony gives Credibility to the message of the Gospel.*

Content:

- *The Holy Spirit and Christian witness.*
- *Charisms: gifts and fruits of the Spirit for mission.*
- *Public witness and consistency of life.*

Activity: *Make a map of spiritual gifts and discover your personal charisms.*

Application: *May each disciple commit to serving according to their gifts and talents.*

Module 5: ***Diakonia - service and discipleship***

Central theme: *The calling to FOLLOW Christ by serving.*

Key Texts: *John 21:19, 22.*

Objective: *To train servant leaders who follow the example of Jesus, the faithful Servant.*

Content:

- *Diakonia: service as a form of leadership.*
- *Following Christ involves sacrifice, obedience, and love.*
- *The community as a place of service.*

Activity: *Commit to performing community service (visits, assistance, or charitable activities).*

Application: *Plan a group service project.*

Module 6: ***Koinonia - communion and mission***

Central theme: *The missionary sending of SENDING into the world.*

Key texts: *John 17:18; 20:21.*

Objective: *To discover that the mature disciple is sent to continue Christ's mission in community.*

Content:

- *The Church as a missionary community.*
- *Communion as an evangelizing force.*
- *Sent by Christ into the contemporary world.*

Dynamic: *Prayer of sending forth and missionary commitment.*

Application: *Each participant defines their field of mission (family, work, community, networks).*

Conclusion of the program:

Plantec trains integral disciples who proclaim, teach, preach, witness, serve, and are sent out, fulfilling the Great Commission with a biblical vision and a pastoral heart.

Final evaluation: Group presentation of a community evangelism project.

Objective: Make a personal commitment to continue disciple others.

Project content:

- Cover and general presentation of the program.
- Introduction to PLANTEC
(*vision, purpose, goals, and methodology*).
- Six complete modules:
 1. *Kerigma – Proclaim*
 2. *Didaskalia – Teach*
 3. *Kerysso – Preach*
 4. *Charisma – Witnessing*
 5. *Diakonia – Follow*
 6. *Koinonia – Send*

Why does the New Testament have these 27 books and not others?

Here we seek the cause, the motive, the reason

The reason why the New Testament (NT) has 27 books and not others is due to a historical, theological, and communal process that lasted several centuries, in which the early Church discerned which writings authentically reflected the gospel of Jesus Christ and were worthy of being considered Scripture. Here I explain it step by step:

1. Origin of the writings: After Jesus' resurrection, his disciples and apostles began to teach orally. Some events and teachings were put into writing: the Gospels, apostolic letters, and other writings (Revelation, Acts). The books we know from the New Testament were written approximately between 50 and 100 AD, in various contexts, to teach, correct, and encourage the churches.

2. Criteria for canonicity: The early Church used several criteria to decide which writings were authentic:

Apostolicity: The book had to be written by an apostle or someone close to an apostle. Example: Matthew and John were

direct disciples of Jesus; Paul wrote letters to the churches. Mark was a disciple of Peter: "*The church in Babylon, chosen together with you, and Mark my son, send you greetings*" (1 Peter 5:13). He was also a companion of Paul: "*Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you greetings, and Mark, Barnabas' nephew, about whom you have received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him*" (Colossians 4:10). Luke was with Paul: "*Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you*" (Colossians 4:14).

Orthodoxy / Conformity with the received faith: The content had to coincide with what the Church already taught about Jesus, salvation, and God. It had to be genuine heritage for the common Christian groups and for the vast majority of churches: "*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree'*" (Galatians 3:13). It is God's initiative, incarnate in Jesus to redeem the world (John 1:1,14), by grace (Ephesians 2:8-9). Because of sin (Romans 3:23), God sent his Son (John 13:16) so that we might be saved by faith in Christ (Mark 9:23; Acts 16:31, John 6:47), among other themes.

Liturgical use and general acceptance: Books that churches regularly read in worship and teaching were considered reliable. This refers to texts that were passed from church to church to be read at Christian gatherings, as Paul explicitly suggested: "*When this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans, and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea*" (Colossians 4:16) and that no one would be left without acquiring knowledge: "*I charge you in the Lord to have this letter read to all the holy brothers*" () (1 Thessalonians 5:27). These

were specific instructions for the various communities of faith: "*When I wrote to you before, I told you not to associate with people who indulge in sexual immorality*" (1 Corinthians 5:9). Thus, the liturgy in Christian communities in different regions should recognize teaching and worship as authority.

Limited time: Literary works had to be from the first generation of the church to be considered inspired, since they had come from the pens of the apostles or their immediate followers. The deadline was set at 125 AD, because it was assumed that the apostles' direct collaborators could have lived until around that time. The last writings are considered to be 2 Peter and the Gospel of John, between 90 and 120 AD. So after 125, there would be no credible writings to consider authentically inspired.

3. Historical process of acceptance: During the first centuries, there were many other Christian writings, such as the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Peter, the Acts of Paul, etc. Some were highly valued locally, but they did not have apostolic authority or general acceptance.

Therefore, at the end of the fourth century, participants in various councils and Church leaders, such as Athanasius of Alexandria in 367 AD, made a list of 27 books of the New Testament that we now know. This canon was ratified in several councils, such as that of Carthage in 397 AD, and consolidated in Christian tradition.

The New Testament itself has 27 books because they were written by apostles or those close to them. They teach the true

and orthodox faith about Christ. They were accepted and used by the Church in general. They were considered inspired by the Holy Spirit.

The other books were left out because they did not meet the criteria for canonicity. The canon was not imposed arbitrarily, but arose from the discernment of the believing community guided by the Spirit.

When we ask why, we are looking for the answer to the historical and pastoral causes and motives that led the sacred authors to write with an eye to the past. This is how the early Christians, with their evangelistic writings, preserved what had been orally transmitted from the message of Jesus since the beginning of the Church.

However, Paul's letters and other missives were written in the present they were living, in response to the need of the communities of faith to guide, encourage, and correct them. In contrast, the Gospels were a remembrance of the events they had seen and heard with Jesus, so that new generations would know the truth of the Gospel:

"I will also diligently endeavor that after my departure you may always remember these things" (2 Peter 1:15).

The New Testament has 27 books because, in the early years of the spread of nascent Christian thought, the Church leaders () were interested in maintaining a consistent line in the values and principles that would form the basis of Christian doctrine. The purpose was to ensure its purity and

originality, as their ancestors had done with the writings of the Old Testament. It is a continuation of the same principles, now applied to the nascent doctrine that was emerging from the Jewish community.

For this reason, the phrase that nothing should be added, changed, or taken away from the Bible soon became popular. This is attested to by some biblical passages:

"You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2).

"You shall be careful to do all that I command you; you shall not add to it or take away from it" (Deuteronomy 12:32).

"I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy in this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away his share in the book of life and in the holy city and in the things that are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18-19).

Among the many people who dared to write, documents appeared that preserved the authentic criteria of the apostles' faith, concepts that had been preserved in memory and transmitted orally, keeping the direct teaching of Jesus' followers and that of his disciples, who were considered inspired.

The church authorities were the ones who made the decision that the New Testament would have these 27 books and no others. The sacred authors wrote for their specific

communities, without thinking about a defined canon. However, the criteria and decision to collect the sacred writings in the early days of Christianity and recognize them with authority and doctrinal guidance is based on what Peter says about Paul's letters:

"And remember that our Lord's patience gives time for people to be saved. This is what our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom God gave him, discussing these matters in all his letters. Some of his comments are difficult to understand, and those who are ignorant and unstable have twisted his letters to mean something very different, just as they do with other parts of Scripture. This will result in their own destruction" (2 Peter 3:15-16).

Therefore, although Damasus I did not order the creation of the New Testament canon, he is considered the person who officially approved the list of 27 books to unify the Bible. It so happened that Damasus I, bishop of Rome, convened the Synod in that city in 382, at which meeting the 27 books of the New Testament were accepted, which were later certified in a document called the "Gelasian Decree," referring to Pope Gelasius and seventy bishops in Rome, who signed the document in 495.

In addition, Damasus himself commissioned Jerome to translate the Bible into Latin, known as the Vulgate, and thus the canon of 27 books of the New Testament was consolidated throughout the Church. However, it was at the Council of Trent (1546) that the canon of 27 books was definitively ratified as official for the Catholic Church. Meanwhile, after some

indecision, the Orthodox and Protestant Churches became convinced that it was better to accept the same New Testament canon.

4. Why not the other books: The other texts did not have direct apostolic authority. They contained teachings that were contrary or problematic to the gospel. They were not accepted by most churches. The books that remained reflect the authentic, universal, and transformative teaching of Jesus.

The term apocryphal comes from the Greek *apókryphos*, which means something hidden or concealed. In the biblical context, these were writings that referred to books used in private settings or in closed spiritual centers. This is how writings such as the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Peter, the Gospel of Mary Magdalene, the Gospel of Judas, the Proto (First) Gospel of James, the Acts of Paul and Thecla, and the Apocalypse of Peter came to be called.

Although they were well known in certain Christian communities, they did not enter the New Testament canon because they lacked the orthodox criteria for being of apostolic origin. They taught Gnostic doctrines, contained fantastic narratives, were less widely circulated, some were written after the year 125, and were rejected by many churches. Based on the experiences and faith of those who held authority in the church, these books did not recognize the authentic voice of the apostles and the living faith in Jesus.

Ultimately, the answer to why these 27 sacred books were written and why they were chosen by the Church to form the

New Testament canon is due to a pastoral interest in illuminating ministry in the light of the Bible. With these texts, the Church has been cared for, guided, and spiritually led according to God's will.

When the Church has followed the Holy Scriptures, Christian leadership is transformed into a ministry of service and not of power, and of care for community life, in the face of the modern activism of each era. The biblical Word guides the Church to remain as the body of Christ. The Bible faithfully teaches, guides, forms, accompanies, and prepares the leadership of the Church for its genuine mission in the service of the kingdom of God.

Writings that did not enter the canon: *Gospel of Thomas*: Gnostic tradition, 114 sayings of Jesus. Non-apostolic, Gnostic, heterodox content. *Gospel of Peter*: passion and resurrection. Doubtful apostolicity, problematic theology. *Gospel of Mary Magdalene*: revelations about Christ. Non-apostolic, Gnostic content. *Gospel of Judas Iscariot*: secret teachings. Not apostolic, doctrine contrary to the NT. *Acts of Paul*: legendary stories. Fictional, not apostolic, not accepted. *Shepherd of Hermas*: parables and exhortations. Widely used in some churches, but not apostolic. *Apocalypse of Peter*: visions of heaven and hell. Partial orthodoxy doubtful, not universal.

Why does the New Testament have these 27 books and not others?

Here we seek the purpose, the objective, the goal

The New Testament has these 27 books to provide the Church with a complete, reliable, and universal guide to the gospel of Jesus Christ, so that believers can know God, live according to His Word, understand the faith, and actively participate in the mission of evangelizing the world. Other writings did not fully fulfill this purpose, so they were not included.

The 27 books were selected to preserve the authentic teaching of Jesus Christ and the apostles, faithfully transmitting the life, death, resurrection, and message of Jesus. It is to maintain correct doctrine in the face of false or distorted teachings. In essence, it is to train and guide believers in the faith. To teach how to live as disciples in terms of ethics, morals, worship, relationships, and prayer.

These 27 books were chosen to equip Christians in reading, understanding, and teaching the Word of God. These writings unify the Church. A common canon, accepted by all churches, is created to avoid doctrinal confusion and to ensure that all believers share the same central message of the gospel.

These 27 books facilitate complete evangelization and provide the Church with a comprehensive resource for teaching and sharing salvation, since they connect the personal mission

of each believer with God's global mission (*Missio Dei*), which guarantees guidance inspired by the Holy Spirit. The recognized books are a reliable spiritual authority for teaching, correction, and discipleship.

When we ask why, we are looking for the answer to the theological and spiritual causes and motives that led the sacred authors to write with an eye to the future. This is how the early Christians, through their writings, encouraged new converts to proclaim the message of Jesus and to continue forming new believers for the mission of the church.

The New Testament manuscripts did not come about spontaneously, but rather the facts and events, the teachings, and the various literary genres were planned and carefully written, using the appropriate natural language of Greek, with intention and purpose: *"These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name"* (John 20:31). The idea was to provide believers and new generations with useful and necessary information so that they could know Jesus Christ.

In addition, each text was preserved with great care, diligence, and zeal to nourish the confidence of believers, guide them on the path of love and hope, and form communities that live according to the example of Christ:

"So that you may know the truth of the things in which you have been instructed" (Luke 1:4). These books were kept and protected from deterioration due to handling and continuous use, but also from misuse, inclement weather, and the possible evil

intentions of those who dared to change, add, or remove part of their content: *"If anyone adds to these things, God will bring upon him the plagues that are written in this book"* (Revelation 22:19). This criterion is very similar to the commands of the Old Testament: *"You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you"* (Deuteronomy 4:2).

The New Testament is composed of books that review the past and illuminate the present, with a view to what is to come. They are writings that contain the living and effective word, which penetrates and discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Hebrews 4:12), which continue to transform souls and build up the Church today: *"All Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness"* (2 Timothy 3:16). They are works of sacred literature with a theological soul and spirituality.

According to experts, Paul's letters were the first writings to circulate among the various local churches, and it is evident that his arguments and rhetoric were very well thought out and studied, as their structure is coherent and logical in maintaining the regularity of the r greeting, thanksgiving, doctrine, exhortation, and farewell in his various publications.

Likewise, later authors of letters, gospels, and other writings all eagerly sought to train Christian disciples in the activities of faith and evangelism: *"When you come together, each one of you has a psalm, has a doctrine, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification"* (1

Corinthians 14:26), that is, Christians have the conviction to strengthen the continuing action of Jesus Christ in the Church in the spiritual realm: *"I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you"* (Romans 1:11).

In addition, many authors wrote verbatim in their documents what their writings were for: *"that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught"* (Luke 1:4). To be certain of the truth: *"These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name"* (John 20:31). Likewise, for steadfastness in grace: *"My purpose in writing to you is to encourage you and to assure you that what you are going through is truly part of God's grace for you. Stand firm in this grace"* (1 Peter 5:12).

The sacred authors also wrote for the assurance of eternal life: *"I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life"* (1 John 5:13). For the defense of the faith: *"Dear friends, I have been eager to write to you about the salvation we share. However, I now realize that I must write to you about another matter, to urge you to defend the faith that God has entrusted once and for all to his holy people"* (Jude 3). To reveal God's action in the final victory: *"This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place"* (Revelation 1:1).

In essence, these 27 writings that make up the New Testament were written to uphold the faith, to affirm the truth of the good news, to strengthen hope, to value witness, to proclaim

the gospel, to form and equip the Christian community, to live in the kingdom of God, which is the Church:

“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:18-19). The kingdom of God is made up of those who accept Jesus as their King and Lord (Revelation 19:16), a reign that becomes visible in the Church when it exercises its mission of reconciliation in the world, proclaiming the good news and strengthening faith in Christ.

Why does the New Testament have these 27 books and not others? It is not a question of questioning the origin and authority of the New Testament canon. Nor is it a question of whether the 27 books are inspired, genuine, and recognized by the apostolic authority of the Church, or whether they are the authentic testimony of what Christ taught and the living experience of his first disciples. It is not a question of how the canon was formed, but why and for what purpose these 27 books form the New Testament.

Given the social situation of conflict between the Jewish people and the Roman invaders, these books were written to serve as the basis for the creation of a community organization, which later became an institution called the Christian Church. The texts that best corresponded to, fulfilled, and covered the six components that the Church needed to continue

incorporating, training, and equipping new generations were chosen: "*And he said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature'*" (Mark 16:15).

Exploring the 27 books, the following reflections emerge regarding the illustration of cause and effect problems: Either the books were not yet written, and given the need for the Church's mission to fulfill Jesus' will to "*go and make disciples of all nations... teaching them*" (Matthew 28:19-20), the authors inspired by God devoted themselves to writing these documents, so that the church could intentionally incorporate them into the development of its evangelizing ministry.

First came the Six Secrets of the Kingdom, and then the literary work was created to nurture its six components. Or first the literature was written, and from the writings, the church incorporated reading, and step by step, the six elements that today structure the work of the Church appeared.

Or the books were already in circulation, and from reading the writings in the various communities of faith, the need arose to create the structure and systematize the components of the Six Dimensions of Mission in order to make use of these books. Or, due to the need of the early church to continue evangelization, the books were created, and later the church incorporated them into the canon called the New Testament.

From the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, together with the leaders he chose, evangelization began and to this day has not stopped as the primary task of the Church. Just as Jesus "*went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues,*

and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people" (Matthew 9:35), the disciples returned rejoicing: "The seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name'" (Luke 10:17), and the same is true today.

After Pentecost, the disciples' enthusiasm to continue evangelizing was greatly revived (Acts 2:1ff), and although the mission later became difficult, such was the zeal of Peter, Paul, and their other companions that they valued the incorporation of a few into the church, regardless of the amount of energy invested: "*I have become weak to the weak, to win the weak; I have become all things to all people, so that I might save some" (1 Corinthians 9:22).*

Let us begin with the content of the 27 books. The Gospels narrate the life of Jesus and his teachings, with his wonders, signs, and wonders. They describe his dramatic passion, death, and resurrection, and the Acts of the Apostles recounts the spread of early Christianity from Jerusalem, Asia Minor, and throughout the Roman Empire.

The New Testament presents Jesus as the promised Messiah, Son of God, universal Savior, and suffering Servant, powerful in deeds and words, compassionate and merciful, the divine Word incarnate. He is the center of creation and head of the Church. He is the perfect high priest and mediator of the new covenant. He will come a second time, victorious over evil, restoring the Kingdom of God.

The doctrine preserved in the New Testament is about salvation through faith and the grace of God. Authority is apostolic, and its function is to organize the Christian life of the Church; its power is generous, loving, full of hope and reconciliation, an apostolicity that confronts false teachers who cause divisions and disorder in communities of faith.

Jesus' disciples fulfill their task of spreading the gospel, forming communities, and training new leaders to preserve Jesus' legacy. The recipients are Jews converted to Christianity and Gentiles of Roman and Greek origin. Although there are already established Christian communities, these churches need to be strengthened in faith and sound doctrine, actions that the apostles fulfill by carrying the message under the name and authority of Jesus Christ and with the permanent presence of the Holy Spirit, fulfilling the missionary work entrusted to the Church.

Regarding the question: Why does the New Testament have these 27 books and not others? So that the Church can fulfill its mission. Through these 27 books, when the Church promotes the reading of the writings in faith communities, then Christians, receptive to biblical teachings, understand the message of the sacred texts and share it with others. In this way, the Church is fulfilling its mission to make Christ known to every creature, to live out his message, and to continue his evangelizing work in the world.

Each of the books in the New Testament fulfills a purpose and has an intention, so that the Church may carry out its

evangelizing work. These 27 books fulfill the six expectations of the Church's work: to teach, to serve, to preach, to evangelize, to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and to remain in community.

The apostolic succession has never lost its continuity throughout the history of the Church. It continues to form disciples as Jesus did, transforming their lives and sending them throughout the world to continue his evangelizing mission of love and salvation, with the grace and power of the Holy Spirit.

The thesis we uphold in this material you have in your hands, and which we will develop and support from here on, is the following:

The New Testament collects and transmits the experience of the first followers of Jesus, who, moved by the Holy Spirit, took on the mandate to proclaim, teach, preach, serve, and live in community. This testimony guarantees the continuity of Christ's teachings and guides the Church today in faithfully following the Lord. Thus, Sacred Scripture impels us to proclaim the good news of salvation, to form and equip disciples, and to organize community life under the transforming action of the Holy Spirit.

Let us gain a deep understanding and fully comprehend the intentions of the sacred authors. To do so, we must scrutinize the following six points, which are mysteriously found throughout the books of the Bible, with honest seriousness and bold spiritual determination.

Now, the question is: what can we Christians do with this content of the New Testament? We can derive practical and spiritual actions directly from the purpose of the NT. Here I explain it step by step:

1. Know God: We must read the Bible regularly to discover God's character, His promises, and His plan of salvation. Meditating on the Gospels and the apostolic letters helps us deepen our relationship with Jesus. The practical exercise is to devote time each day to reading and reflecting on the Word.

2. Living according to His Word: Apply biblical teaching to daily life in terms of ethics, decisions, relationships, and service. Allow the Word to transform the way we think, feel, and act. The practical exercise is to use biblical principles to resolve conflicts or guide our behavior at work and in the family.

3. Understand the faith: Study the Bible and reflect on its theological and practical meaning. Ask questions, discuss, and learn in community to deepen your faith. The practical exercise is to participate in Bible study or discipleship groups.

4. Actively participating in the mission to evangelize the world: Sharing the gospel through words and actions. Teaching others the Word of God, making disciples, and serving the community. The practical exercise is to invite someone to a Bible study, help those in need, or testify about our experience with Christ.

The content of the New Testament gives us tools to know God personally, transform our lives according to His Word, deepen our faith and understand the truth of the gospel, share the message of salvation, and participate in God's global mission. In short: read, understand, live, and teach the Bible to make disciples and fulfill God's overall plan for the world.

The six components that make up the overall plan for complete evangelization - Plan Tec -

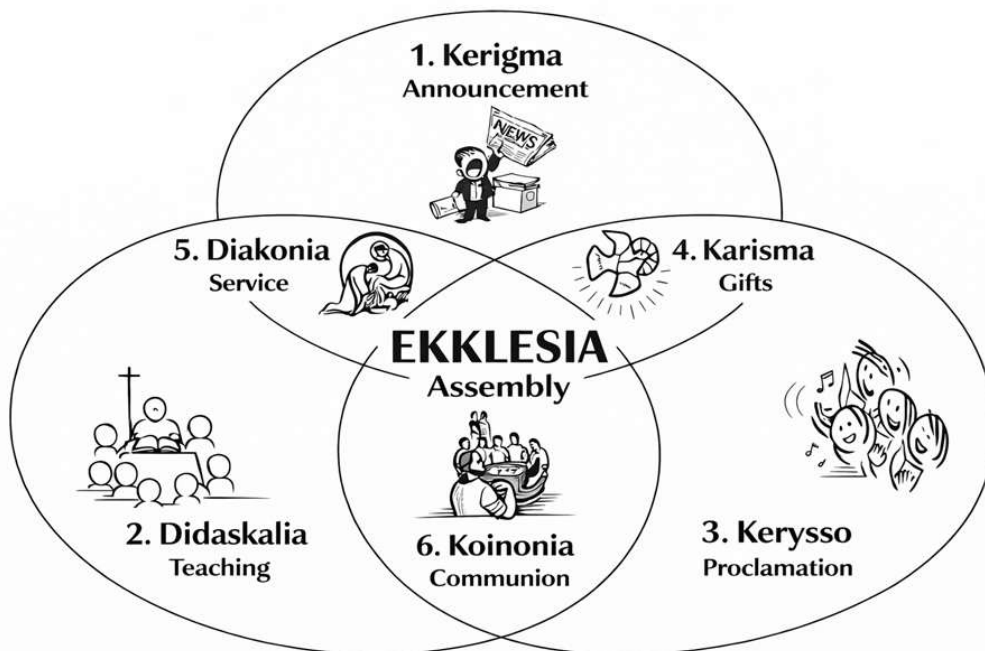
Complete evangelization is not an isolated activity of the Church, but the participation of the entire community of believers in God's total plan, whose purpose is to bring the integral gospel—proclamation, discipleship, transformation, and service—to all people, in all cultures, and in all dimensions of life, thus fulfilling God's global mission in the world.

We call the comprehensive plan of complete evangelization the divine strategy, revealed in Scripture and continued by the Church, through which God seeks to reach and restore human beings in all their dimensions. This plan integrates the proclamation of the gospel, spiritual formation, community transformation, and the manifestation of the Kingdom of God in every culture and in every place.

The total plan of complete evangelization is the church's participation in God's global mission, encompassing the proclamation of the gospel, compassion for the needy, the

denunciation of evil, and cultural transformation. It involves the entire Church', bringing the whole gospel to the whole world and to every person.

The total plan of complete evangelization is the fulfillment of the risen Christ's purpose to make disciples of all nations, bringing his power, presence, and teaching to every people and every sphere of life, to bring all things under his lordship, through six dimensions:



1. Kerygma: the impact of the encounter with Jesus.

It is about the impetus to ANNOUNCE: - "He first found his brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah' (which translated means, 'the Christ')" (John 1:41). - "But these are written so that you may believe, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31).

2. Didaskalia: the pedagogy of Christian knowledge.

This corresponds to the teaching of TEACHING: - "*And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom*" (Matthew 4:23). - "*Teach the new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you*" (Matthew 28:20).

3. Kerysso: understanding the message of Jesus.

This refers to *the* enthusiasm of PREACHING - "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed*" (Luke 4:18).

4. Karisma: the integrity of God's Word.

It relates to the experience of WITNESSING: - "*You are witnesses of all these things*" (Luke 24:48). - "*You will be my witnesses, and you will tell people about me everywhere*" (Acts 1:8).

5. Diakonia: the unfolding of Christian service.

It has to do with the decision to SERVE: - "*If anyone wants to be first, he will be last of all and servant of all*" (Mark 9:35). - "*For the Son of Man... came to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many*" (Mark 10:45).

6. Koinonia: the sign of Jesus in the world.

It consists of the discernment of LIVING TOGETHER: -
"Therefore, if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort from love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in harmony and of one mind" (Philippians 2:1-2). - "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them as their God" (Revelation 21:3).

Missionary Hexagram:

1. κήρυγμα (*kérygma*) — *announcement, proclamation*
2. διδασκαλία (*didaskalía*) – *teaching*
3. κηρύσσω (*kēryssō*) – *to preach with authority*
4. χάρισμα (*chárisma*) – *gift of grace*
5. διακονία (*diakonía*) – *service*
6. κοινωνία (*koinōnía*) – *communion*

The Six Dimensions of Mission is a structure that forms a kind of formative spiral and movement called the Missional Hexagram:

HEXAGRAMA MISIONAL



1. Kerygma: encounter/proclaim
2. Didaskalía: formation / teaching
3. Kéryssos: public mission / proclaim
4. Kharisma: to testify / to give evidence
5. Diakonia: service / follow
6. Koinonia: sent community / sharing

Missionary Hexagram:

1. κήρυγμα (kḗrygma) – gospel for non-believers.
ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑ
2. διδασκαλία (didaskalía) – faith education for believers.
ΔΙΔΑΣΚΑΛΙΑ
3. κηρύσσω (kērýssō) – public proclamation of the gospel.
ΚΗΡΥΣΣΩ
4. χάρισμα (chárisma) – divine gifts given to believers.
ΧΑΡΙΣΜΑ
5. διακονία (diakonía) – ministry or work of believers.
ΔΙΑΚΟΝΙΑ
6. κοινωνία (koinōnía) – union among members of the Church.
ΚΟΙΝΟΝΙΑ

ALFABETO GRIEGO

MAYÚSCULA	MINÚSCULA	EQUIVALENTE LATINA	NOMBRE DE LA LETRA
A	α	a	<i>alfa</i>
B	β	b	<i>beta</i>
Γ	γ	g	<i>gamma</i>
Δ	δ	d	<i>delta</i>
E	ε	e	<i>epsilon</i>
Z	ζ	z	<i>zeta</i>
H	η	e	<i>eta</i>
Θ	θ	th	<i>theta</i>
I	ι	i	<i>iota</i>
K	κ	k	<i>kappa</i>
Λ	λ	l	<i>lambda</i>
M	μ	m	<i>my</i>
N	ν	n	<i>ny</i>
Ξ	ξ	x	<i>xi</i>
O	ο	o	<i>omicron</i>
Π	π	p	<i>pi</i>
P	ρ	r	<i>ro</i>
Σ	σ	s	<i>sigma</i>
T	τ	t	<i>tau</i>
Υ	υ	u	<i>ipsilon</i>
Φ	φ	f	<i>fi</i>
X	χ	j	<i>ji</i>
Ψ	ψ	ps	<i>psi</i>
Ω	ω	o	<i>omega</i>



I. MATTHEW AS DIDASKALIA
A COURSE IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

1. Discipleship

The Church's mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world involves personal conversion and the development of Christian characteristics in the lives of believers. This mission focuses on following Jesus' command to go and make disciples, teaching them to obey everything He taught (Matthew 28:19-20), not only doctrine, but the complete experience of faith.

Discipleship is about the process of following Jesus, learning from Him, and helping others to do the same. Discipleship is at the heart of Christian life and the mission of the Church. The Christian vocation is a personal call to follow Jesus: "*Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men*" (Matthew 4:19). Contributing to forming and accompanying others: "*Go and make disciples... teaching them*" (Matthew 28:19–20).

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 of Matthew are known as the Sermon on the Mount. In this compendium, Jesus, seeing the crowd, speaks to his disciples (Matthew 5:1). In his teaching, he establishes how his disciples should live and behave in the Church in order to establish the kingdom of heaven. Jesus goes straight

to the heart of his disciples, above all rational knowledge or human law. The deepest quest of human beings is clearly and specifically defined in a Greek term known as *macarios*, which translates as bliss, joy, or happiness (Matthew 5:1-12).

If a disciple of Jesus wants to be in the kingdom of heaven, he must be and live poor in spirit (Matthew 5:3) and suffer persecution for being righteous (Matthew 5:10). Even if it involves suffering and rejection, it is better to maintain goodness within Christian values, even if the rest of humanity thinks and acts differently.

If a disciple wants to receive the earth as an inheritance, he must be meek (Matthew 5:5). To see God, one must be pure in heart (Matthew 5:8). He is the disciple who is not double-minded, sincere, loyal, and of upright conduct. If we want to be called children of God, we must be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9). This means being promoters of reconciliation, harmony, and balance.

After Jesus succinctly lists the beatitudes, in the rest of his discourse he develops the themes as a whole, explaining how disciples must have a new way of life. A sincere relationship with God leads the disciple to true piety, and the cultivation of practical faith leads him to good discernment and to always have right intentions. Jesus' disciples pursue peace, harmony, and balance in life, and these values can only be achieved through cordial brotherhood and good understanding in interpersonal relationships (Matthew 5:13-48).

But Jesus, instead of abolishing the law, as some Jews who had embraced Christianity thought, says: "*Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them*" (Matthew 5:17). This change was not in the law but in purpose: to enter the kingdom of heaven, one must fulfill the commandments, both externally and internally, in the heart, spiritually.

That is why almsgiving, prayer, and fasting are external actions that spring from a sincere heart and are not for show. Discretion and moderation are human virtues, and recognition comes from God. Therefore, the actions of Christians have the spiritual intention of genuine modesty and do not seek the approval of people, the applause of others, or earthly glory: "*Your Father who sees in secret will reward you in public*" (Matthew 6:4, 6, 18).

The life of Jesus' disciple is the intimate attitude of each person in their relationship with God (Matthew 6:1-18), in detachment from possessions (Matthew 6:19-24), and in the true priority, which is to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness (Matthew 6:25-34). The kingdom of God satisfies the whole life of human beings. The golden rule and its results lead to a full life. Everything depends on whether or not people follow these words of life (Matthew 7:1-29).

2. The Apostolate

The term apostle is derived from the Greek ἀπόστολος (apostolos) and means envoy or messenger. The word apostle was used in secular Greek literature to mean messenger, emissary, or naval envoy. Now the term apostle is used in the context of evangelism and missionary work: *"Then he called his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity. The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew the tax collector, James the son of Alphaeus, Lebbaeus, surnamed Thaddaeus, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him"* (Matthew 10:1-4).

This designation did not at any time signify a privilege or position of honor, nor a position to gain more prestige or earn a better salary. Jesus himself warns them: *"You will be hated by all because of my name"* (Matthew 10:22). The apostolate is the faithful action and loyal work of the apostle sent to fulfill a mission. He is a representative of the one who sends him to deliver a message. A messenger does not speak of himself, nor on his

own behalf. His authority rests with the sender, who delegates to the envoy the spiritual authority to live in service, sacrifice, and faithfulness. He is a bearer of the word.

In Matthew 10, Jesus gives instructions to the disciples, whom he has called apostles, and entrusts them with what they must do while fulfilling their mission. In effect, they are given authority for missionary work (Matthew 10:1-4), they are told where they should go and who their audience will be, those who will listen to them (Matthew 10:5-6), they are told what they should preach and what results they will obtain (Matthew 10:7-8).

They will set out on their work with the bare necessities, they will go with little, and they will have to adapt to the circumstances that arise (Matthew 10:9-15). They will not fear the consequences because their actions will have much more value and the results will be compelling (Matthew 10:16-33). They will practice detachment (Matthew 10:34-39), with the promise that the reward is much better (Matthew 10:40-42).

The apostolate of Jesus' envoys displayed authority and power: *"Then he called his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity"* (Matthew 10:1). The apostles obediently followed his instructions: *"As you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons; freely you have received, freely give"* (Matthew 10:7-8).

Both Paul and Barnabas were made apostles or missionaries, sent with the authority of the leaders of the early Church and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit: *"As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. Then, after fasting and praying, they laid their hands on them and sent them off"* (Acts 13:3).

From then on, Paul and Barnabas were always considered apostles: *"When the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting"* (Acts 14:14). They were also recognized with certain characteristics and appropriate titles, such as when Paul also called himself an apostle to the Gentiles: *"For I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry"* (Romans 11:13).

Thus, the apostolate developed and expanded over time, through many places and selfless believers who responded with various ministries. Timothy received the succession from Paul: *"For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands"* (2 Timothy 1:6), and Paul suggests to Titus that he continue the ministerial chain: *"I left you in Crete so that you might correct what was lacking and appoint elders in every town"* (Titus 1:5).

3. Christian doctrine

In this third discourse, Jesus appears in public by the sea and speaks to the crowd, but in parables: "*On that day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. And a great crowd gathered around him, and he got into a boat and sat down, and all the crowd stood on the beach. And he spoke to them at length in parables*" (Matthew 13:1). In this chapter 13 of Matthew, Jesus reveals to his followers the doctrine he came to impart. Using allegories in eight parables, he proclaims the kingdom he came to establish.

This group of short, simple stories is called the parables of the kingdom. They are illustrations that take common elements from everyday life, which Jesus uses in the form of comparisons to explain the depth of his doctrine. These analogies are not rules or codes of conduct, but spiritual truths about the Kingdom of God. They are very easy to memorize, but difficult to understand in meaning, since what is novel is not the anecdote of the fable, but the moral or message it conveys.

Therefore, people recognize the symbol and the story of the parable, but do not understand the meaning of Jesus'

allegorical speech. Moreover, the disciples did not understand why Jesus used this strategy, since at that time they still lacked spiritual discernment. Hence, Jesus gave them a well-known saying so that they would make an effort to understand his message: "*He who has ears to hear, let him hear*" (Matthew 13:9), inviting them to reflect.

Each comparison contains a riddle, which in biblical terms is called a mystery, something very secret and hidden that must be discovered like a treasure: "*Jesus said to them, 'Have you understood all these things? They replied, 'Yes, Lord. He said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old'*" (Matthew 13:51-52). Jesus, on the one hand, reveals his doctrine and at the same time hides its meaning, an interpretation that can only be made in the light of faith, which is the key that opens the chest of mystery.

God's plan is for his will to be done in heaven and on earth (Matthew 6:10), so there can be no dissolution or debauchery on earth, for God's physical creation is an extension of his invisible realm.

The parables achieve the effect Jesus seeks, but they alarm the disciples: "*Then the disciples came to him and asked, 'Why do you speak to them in parables? Jesus' answer is direct and encouraging to his disciples: 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given'*" (Matthew 13:11). The understanding of doctrine must be

spiritual. To be disciples of Jesus, there must be an inner disposition of the heart and spirit.

There is a difference between the disciples and the crowd. The disciples follow Jesus with a sincere attitude and are willing to learn and obey. Meanwhile, the rest of the people came to Jesus out of curiosity, following him for physical and material gain or simple tradition, but with no intention of accepting his new doctrine. The people, in general, behaved in the manner of the Jews who had already been denounced in Isaiah 6:9-10, saying: *"You will hear but not understand; you will see but not perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can scarcely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them"* (Matthew 13:13-15).

Without a doubt, discipleship involves a more intimate and confidential relationship with Jesus. Others, even though they hear, do not understand, because they lack the receptor of faith. The Master imparted formal and academically understandable instructions to his disciples, who were willing, convinced, and committed to continuing the mission in the Church.

The kingdom is like a person sowing seeds in a field; many seeds are lost, others germinate (Matthew 10:1-9; 18-23), and some are false (Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43). As in agriculture, the kingdom grows (Matthew 13:31-33), but it must also be found (Matthew 13:44-50), so not everyone can be part of the

kingdom (Matthew 13:47-52). The reason why the kingdom of heaven is explained through parables is prophetic (Matthew 13:10-17; 34-35).

4. The ecclesial organization

Jesus' fourth discourse is found in chapter 18 of Matthew. The intention of this discourse is to teach how disciples and apostles should behave in the body of the church, which Jesus himself came to establish and build according to his will and purpose. The idea is that his followers affirm their commitment to contribute to living according to his divine disposition: "*Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*" (Matthew 6:10).

Our task, as Jesus' chosen ones, is to bear fruit by evangelizing (Matthew 7:16), which consists of doing what he tells us, so that his will may become embedded in and enrich our lives, as a testimony to all: "*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come*" (Matthew 24:14), which consists in the full establishment of the Kingdom of God.

In the instructions Jesus gives to the disciples when they came to him with the question, "*Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?*" (Matthew 18:1), he takes the opportunity to explain to them that communion with him should result in the

fruits of coexistence among believers, not through human effort, but because they are bound by his Word.

By *turning* to virtues such as humility, human beings demonstrate that they must adopt attitudes and qualities that characterize children: "*Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me*" (Matthew 18:1-5).

Jesus' comparison with childhood is so that the disciples understand that they must dwell in complete trust and dependence on God, living with the simplicity of someone who does not think only of working to have and accumulate, but of being receptive to divine mercy and care, always maintaining purity of heart and being available and teachable in obeying and learning.

Our hope in the Savior is not only for those of us who are already in the Church and are faithful and loyal believers. The purpose of our organization is to have our doors open so that others may also enter and become part of the body and flock of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are facilitators, so that others can form the church. In other words, as members and leaders of the ecclesial organization, we are called to be useful in building up the Church.

When there is someone who believes but is still in formation and another person prevents them from entering the Church, it is a stumbling block for that believer who is still

small but of great value to the kingdom of God. Symbolically, Jesus represents the causes of stumbling, sometimes because of our actions, sometimes because of where we walk, what we see in a bad way, and also because of our capricious desires. In essence, everything that leads us to separate ourselves from God is sin, it is to err and fail, it is to stray from the path, which is Jesus, and as a consequence we fall into the fire:

"Therefore, if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life lame or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hellfire" (Matthew 18:8-9). What saves us is discernment and the radical renunciation of what separates us from God, and that is what the Church is in the world, a refuge while we reach heaven.

Our ecclesial organization has a great commitment, for it must ensure that the chosen ones are not lost and that the lost are rescued (Matthew 18:10-14). Our mission is to put our gifts at the service of others. The strength, solidity, unity, and perseverance of this assembly is forgiveness (Matthew 18:15-35), which results in helping others find the way to salvation in Christ.

5. Christian evaluation

After having gone through the requirements of discipleship and the values of apostolic succession, and then understanding the purpose of the sound doctrine given by Jesus to believers and understanding the mission of the Church, now comes the evaluation. It is God's assessment of our conduct with regard to discipleship, the apostolate, doctrine, and the mission of the Church.

In Matthew, chapters 23 through 25, Jesus begins to speak to the people and his disciples about the imminent judgment they must face. The atmosphere is like that of restless and nervous students facing the final exam of the academic year at school. Matthew presents a spiritual curriculum, as in an official school course, which concludes with an exam that measures the students' approval or disapproval of what they have learned, in this case consisting of an evaluation of the subject taught by Jesus. The evaluation begins in chapter 23 of Matthew against the Jewish authorities, then in Matthew 24 comes the examination of the Church along with warnings of his second coming, and then, in Matthew 25- , comes the judgment of

all nations. In other words, Jews, Christians, and all people of the world in general will be evaluated in light of Jesus' teachings, divided into two groups: believers for reward and unbelievers for condemnation.

In the context of Matthew 7:24-27, Jesus speaks to them about the difference between a house built on sand and a house built on rock. In the first of the five discourses presented in the Gospel of Matthew, he speaks to them about the conduct of Christian discipleship, and the response was very favorable. Those who were present agreed that they accepted his proposal (Matthew 7:28-29). In front of the people and the disciples, Jesus begins by referring to the scribes and Pharisees who are representatives of the seat of Moses (Matthew 23:1-2). The seat of Moses is the position of authority held by the scribes and Pharisees already in the time of the Roman Empire. Their occupation consisted of guarding, reading, interpreting, and applying the Mosaic Law, following it, and practicing it along with its teachings.

Therefore, Jesus recommends that the people and his disciples receive their teachings and respect legal and religious matters, but he rejects the evil deeds of those who wield authority (Matthew 23:3). And what things they were doing! So dishonest and despicable were their actions that he who did not come to abolish the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them (Matthew 5:17), now has a hostile position toward the Jewish authorities. The answer is Jesus' vehement description of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 23:4-7).

In the academic context, Moses is the great lawgiver and teacher, his supporters and successors are the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 23:1-39). But Jesus is now the new Moses, who criticizes the moral inconsistency of those who wield that power, anticipating that, in the exercise of his authority, he is different (Matthew 23:8-10). Jesus transformed Moses' teaching into his own teaching with his teaching of the gospel. And now those who would inherit that legitimate authority and righteous teaching would be his disciples in the Church. The change from scribes and Pharisees to disciples consists of witness, which in Greek means martyrdom (Matthew 16:24-26). Witness is what guarantees the identification of genuine Christians.

Another requirement that the scribes and Pharisees did not meet was true service (Matthew 23:11-12). This is how the early Christians learned from the apostles, who are the new authorized teachers and teach what Jesus commanded them (Matthew 28:19-20). Just as at the beginning of the school term (Matthew 5:1), Jesus began by going up a mountain and sitting down to teach his disciples, patiently imparting his instructions, now, also seated, but on the Mount of Olives (Matthew 24:3), he does the same. Jesus predicts the fall of the old school (Matthew 24:1-28) with the coming of the Son of Man (Matthew 24:29-51). The final exam consists of evaluating the prudence and productivity of the disciples in the Church (Matthew 25:1-30), and then the judgment will come, in which all nations will gather before the glorious Jesus (Matthew 25:31-39).

6. Complement in five narratives

The Gospel of Matthew is composed of five discourses and five narratives, well-structured theologically and pedagogically. After each discourse, the impact of Jesus' works and deeds in his public activity is narrated. Jesus applies his teachings in a practical way to the people around him, so that his disciples may understand the scope of his doctrine. After the first discourse, Jesus begins to perform a series of healings (Matthew 8-9). These are miracles of healing in which Jesus demonstrates his power and identity as the Messiah, the anointed one of God and the promised Christ who comes with authority and the Word:

"When evening came, they brought to him all who were possessed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: 'He himself took our infirmities and bore our diseases'" (Matthew 8:16-18). The coming of the Messiah is a prophetic promise from the Old Testament that is fulfilled in Jesus, in whom the power of God is manifested and the presence of the kingdom of heaven is revealed: "Yet it was our weaknesses that he

bore; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his difficulties were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins!" (Isaiah 53:4).

At the beginning of the narrative, Jesus manifests his authority by performing miracles of healing, showing power over nature, and exercising strong dominion over demons. He performs six miracles in a row: by healing the leper, Jesus purifies (Matthew 8:1-4). By healing the centurion's servant, he manifests the power of his word (Matthew 8:5-13). By going to Peter's house and healing his mother-in-law and others who were sick (Matthew 8:14-17), the prophecy of Isaiah 53:4 is fulfilled.

Then comes the cost of following Jesus (Matthew 8:18-22), recalling what he said in the Sermon on the Mount, in chapters 5, 6, and 7 of Matthew, about the demands and responsibility of discipleship. This cost has its reward in aspiring to have the same authority as Jesus, who calms the storm (Matthew 8:23-27) and prevails against demons (Matthew 8:28-34). The Master is showing his disciples how it is done, so that when it is their turn to go out into the mission field (Matthew 10:5-15), they will be prepared.

Another dilemma concerns the change of situation and transformation of human beings. In chapter 9, Matthew presents Jesus with authority to heal, forgiving sins (Matthew 9:1-8) and convincing even tax collectors to be his disciples (Matthew 9:9-13) as a sign that Jesus has the power to overcome even death (Matthew 9:18-26). Power and authority that reveal: "*The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins*" (Matthew

9:6) and that he also shares them with human beings: "*When the people saw this, they were amazed and glorified God, who had given such authority to men*" (Matthew 9:8).

Jesus comes to bring a new era; new wine needs new wine-skins (Matthew 9:14-17). The old structures of traditions, rites, and religious practices will be replaced by a living organization, with the gospel of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Hence, he has the power and authority to heal (Matthew 9:18-31), because he is the promised Messiah and is recognized as *the "Son of David"* (Matthew 9:27).

Jesus heals a mute man possessed by a demon (Matthew 9:32-34), and the Pharisees accuse him of acting by the power of the devil. Jesus travels through the cities and has compassion on the crowds (Matthew 9:35-38). He preaches, heals, and calls for prayer so that there will be more workers for the harvest. The transition to the New Testament is made (Matthew 11-12). Revelation of Jesus as the Son of God with miracles and healings (Matthew 14-17). Jesus confronts the attitudes of various characters and the final activities in Jerusalem (Matthew 19-22). The plot to arrest Jesus, the passion, death, resurrection, and the Great Commission (Matthew 26-28).



II. MARK AS DIACONIA
A TREATISE ON SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

1. Cultural context

Marcos is a reflection on the social reality in which Jesus lived and the early church developed. The Jewish people were dominated by the Roman Empire. The oppressor controlled the area politically, administratively, and militarily, which is part of the Fertile Crescent connecting Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, and Rome. Judea is equidistant from three continents and a crossroads in the strategy of trade routes. Empires have always coveted this land and its surroundings, and Judea participates in trade and acquires wealth, as do the surrounding towns. When Christianity appeared in this region, agriculture and livestock farming, fishing, and a variety of crafts promoted by carpenters, blacksmiths, potters, goldsmiths, and weavers predominated.

In the exchange of goods and services, exaggerated social inequality appeared, due to corruption, the condescension of Jewish leaders, and the unbridled appetite for greed and avarice of those who acquired more economic, political, and religious power. These abuses led the people to demand justice and protection from the Jewish authorities and, but faced with

the indifference of the rulers, the people sank into despair, acted in self-defense, and clung to the hope of the Messiah, the anointed one sent by God, who had often rescued them from slavery, led them to victory, and brought them to safety in times past. Thus, because of the imperial policy of "divide and conquer," the region was divided into ethnic groups of Jews (pure race), Samaritans (Israelites and foreigners), Galileans (Jews and Gentiles), Decapolitans, and Caesarians (Gentiles and pagans). Gentiles because they were not of Jewish race and pagans because they worshipped many gods. These divisions produced poverty, marginalization, lack of social assistance and protection, and blatant abuse.

In Mark, Jesus sides with the marginalized and vulnerable, criticizing unjust power structures while preaching that the Kingdom of God is coming for all. Meanwhile, the religious clique, such as the high priests, Sadducees, scribes, and Pharisees, with their rigid traditional ties, legalistic attitudes, and vanity of power, were concerned about their prestige and social status and criticized Jesus, seeking to curb his preaching that was reaching the people. For it was the common people who were the recipients of the grace and blessings of the kingdom of heaven, and it was they who were trained in his teaching and received healing; many deaf, demon-possessed, blind, crippled, and others were transformed.

The Jewish and Roman elites, for the sake of dishonest gains, protecting their properties, and preserving their hierarchies, regulated cultural and social life with the legalistic enthusiasm of ancient customs that were impractical and of little

value for the time. To maintain their prestige and moral authority, they were interested in reviving the religious spirit that revolved around the Temple in Jerusalem, with sacrifices, rituals, and compliance with Mosaic law. However, the Gospel emphasized accessibility to the Kingdom of God, breaking down the social and cultural barriers upheld by the Judeo-Roman rulers.

Jesus presents himself as the suffering Servant of God, who gives his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Therefore, Mark's interest is for the people themselves to discover who Jesus is (Mark 1-8). Hence the messianic secret: Jesus' command that they keep silent about his authority and power manifested in miracles. The mission of the Messiah (Mark 9-16) focuses on Jesus' actions and discipleship, on the journey to Jerusalem and the final sacrifice on the cross.

Mark highlights the period of transition and interaction between Jewish society and Roman rule in Galilee. He reveals the various religious beliefs and practices (Mark 2:18), the observance of the Sabbath (Mark 2:24; 3:4), what the time of Jesus was like (Mark 6:45 to Mark 8:26), religious festivals (Mark 14:12), and dietary laws (Mark 7:5-8). In short, the Judeo-Greek culture, invaded by the Romans, was made up of a society of peasants (Mark 15:21), fishermen (Mark 1:16), religious leaders (Mark 2:16; 8:15; 14:43), and Romans (Mark 15:39).

2. Social portrait

When Jesus began his ministry, he encountered a society in social, political, and religious crisis. There was a separation between rich and poor, Jews and Gentiles, monotheists and polytheists, healthy and sick, oppressors and oppressed, allies and opponents. The Jews, because of their ethnic and religious origins, considered themselves superior and privileged, viewing other peoples as Gentiles because they were of a different race and pagans, so called because they were polytheists and believed in gods such as Zeus, Apollo, Venus, Jupiter, Mars, among other gods. Migration was common, for trade and business, for better opportunities and survival, visits to relatives, or forced displacement. So, faith, law, and worship, in danger of being contaminated, aroused the zeal of the Jews, which made them cling to preserving their racial and religious purity. Priests, scribes, and Pharisees, who controlled the temple and the reading, interpretation, and teaching of the law, neglected the sick and marginalized, whom they considered impure and punished by God, and therefore excluded from the temple and social life, as were the Gentiles, made up of Romans, Greeks, Syrians, and Phoenicians.

The Gospel of Mark portrays a society that excludes and marginalizes others because they are considered impure. Such as lepers (Mark 1:40-45), paralytics (Mark 2:1-12), tax collectors and sinners (Mark 2:15-17), demoniacs (Mark 5:1-20), women (Mark 5:25-34), the poor and hungry (Mark 6:30-44). For having different customs and traditions (Mark 7:1-23), for being immigrants and foreigners (Mark 7:26), for being deaf (Mark 7:31-37) or blind (Mark 8:22-26) like Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52). Jesus lived in a society that ignored children and the humble (Mark 10:13-16), devoured the houses of widows, and exploited vulnerable people (Mark 12:38-40), widows, and women (Mark 12:41-44). This was the social life that Jesus encountered, and it was among this humanity that he was raised, grew up, lived, and began his ministry in this environment of discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion.

Jesus grew up in Galilee, from where he left to be baptized (Mark 1:9). It was in Galilee where he began his public ministry (Mark 1:14). And it is in Galilee, by the sea, where he begins to call his first disciples (Mark 1:16-20). Capernaum, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, was the base city for Jesus' ministry (Mark 2:1). He also had his home there (Mark 9:33-35). And precisely, when he rose from the dead, he went to Galilee to meet his disciples again (Mark 16:6-7). So, Jerusalem remained a place of suffering, pain, and death, and Galilee represented a state of life, in the style of Jesus, a land of humble people opens to encountering Christ, for the continuity of his ministry and mission. It is from Galilee that the disciples set out to all the peoples (Mark 16:20).

It should be noted that the preaching of the early Christians was intended to transform the situation of the Jewish people with the coming of the kingdom of God (Mark 1:14). The good news of salvation with the coming of the kingdom was meant to change the social life of many people. Therefore, the early Christians were Jews before the resurrection and remained Jews afterwards, but restored by the work and message of Jesus. Convinced that Jesus was the Messiah promised to the Jews (Mark 8:29), the early Christian community did not separate to form a new religion, but to live out the fulfillment of God's promise.

The goal of Christianity is to change a society of people possessed by demons (Mark 1:32-34), sick (Mark 1:40), and with unclean spirits (Mark 1:23), and to counteract the presence of those same unclean spirits (Mark 1:24; 3:11); to eradicate poverty and other plagues (Mark 3:10), to discard leaders who show no compassion for the needy (Mark 2:17). The messianic message is to suppress the hypocrisy and corruption of religious leaders and authorities (Mark 12:38-40), abolish the obsession with power (Matthew 10:42), and ensure justice and integrity in social leadership: "*And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have authority to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons*" (Mark 3:15).

3. Social criticism

Jesus' social criticism of the authorities and rulers of his time is not that of a political leader or the Messiah expected by Judaism, who would be "*a human Jewish leader, a descendant of King David, who will rebuild the Temple, gather all Jews in Israel, bring world peace, and promote universal observance of the Torah*" (Talmud and the work of Maimonides). The Christian Messiah is God himself who becomes present to change social conditions in favor of those who are suffering and "*give his life as a ransom for many*" (Mark 10:45). Furthermore, since God is the one who forgives sins (Mark 2:7), Jesus in his divinity demonstrates that he has the power to forgive in order to save sinners (Mark 2:5-10), to free them from evil by casting out demons, healing them, and rescuing them from death (Mark 5:1-43). He gave his life at the price of blood (Mark 14:24). His death and resurrection are the greatest act of redemption and reconciliation (Mark 16:6).

Mark emphasizes Jesus' identity from the outset: "*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*" (Mark 1:1). He reiterates this affirmation at Jesus' baptism (Mark 1:11) and

in the transfiguration (Mark 9:7). In the statements of the demons (Mark 3:11) and in the confession of the Roman centurion (Mark 15:39). The Messiah is not the superhero of the Jews, but the servant who suffers for humanity (Mark 10:45), modest, without exhibitionism or sumptuousness (Mark 1:34). This attitude is called the messianic secret: Jesus wants his true identity to be understood in the light of his death and resurrection, not through success and fame, which is why "*he commanded them not to tell anyone about him*" (Mark 8:30).

However, his message is one of freedom for the poor, marginalized, and oppressed (Mark 7:6-9). While the Jews complain about the invading Roman empire, Jesus makes them realize that the social problem lies in the system that favors the rich and privileged, leaving the most vulnerable in misery (Mark 12:40). Sacrifices and offerings are temple taxes that marginalize the most needy into poverty, while the Jewish authorities of scribes, priests, and Pharisees, who control the institutional, religious, and legal system, are driven to increase their profits (Mark 12:38-39), living off the poorest through the system of donations according to Jewish law (Mark 12:43-44). Jesus presents the project of the kingdom of God, where justice, equality, and compassion prevail for all. It is a denunciation and social criticism of the system of corruption that prevails in Judea and its surroundings. The social composition is against the division of Jewish culture, power groups, and religious castes.

With the recriminations that Jesus makes in his direct messages, he moves some people to change (Mark 10:17- 22).

Because among Jesus' disciples there should be no ambition, no desire for domination, nor a mentality of power and hierarchy (Mark 10:42-43). Jesus denounced the oppressive structure of social and political power that the leaders exercised over the Jewish people. On the other hand, there were the popular and marginalized classes. Jesus surrounded himself with peasants, fishermen, women, the sick, and the poor, showing a preference for those who were on the margins of the system (Mark 1:40-45). Jesus proposes a new society, where everyone is welcomed, healed, and valued. A kingdom where justice, mercy, and love replace oppression and selfishness. We are called to build a Church that is a sign of the kingdom of God. As yesterday, criticism continues today against the contemporary church (Mark 2:15-16), and Jesus' proposal is the same: "*Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners*" (Mark 2:17).

Messianism is characterized by its imposition of authority (Mark 1:21-28). It challenges the norms of exclusion (Mark 1:44), confronts injustices (Mark 7:9-13) and the exploitation of the poor (Mark 5:26); it confronts religious people who appear pious (Mark 7:21-23) and are unbelievers (Mark 3:22-30), acting out of power and prestige (Mark 11:31-33). Pharisees and scribes prioritize legalistic observance (Mark 10:5-6). There is a call to faith (Mark 7:37; 9:25), to justice (Mark 8:25), to compassion and mutual love (Mark 3:1-6).

4. Human dignity

Jesus' concern was to rescue lost humanity, which had strayed from God's divine plan: "*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel*" (Mark 1:15). Now the return to paradise had a unique and monumental cost, which only God himself could redeem, in his only begotten Son (John 3:16). By losing their divine dignity, human beings created their own civilization in order to survive (Genesis 3:14-19). What Jesus came to rescue was lost in Eden. The fall of humanity was not only disobedience, but a rupture that affected relationships with God, among fellow human beings, and with creation. Replacing trust in God with trust in oneself was a deep wound in human beings that Jesus came to heal.

The opposite of Judaism is Jesus and his Christian proposal (Mark 7:9, 13). Dignity is a requirement for fulfilling God's commandments and is not only a privilege but a call to live in a way that reflects God's righteous and compassionate character (Mark 3:1). Through Mark's teaching, we understand that dignity is the inherent and inalienable value that every person has by virtue of their solid human essence, which is the image

and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). Human dignity comes from God, not from external conditions, positive laws, or civil or religious norms created by the rulers of countries or states and leaders who regulate a religion. No one loses their dignity, because it is not based on what they have or do, but on the image of God. We are all equal in dignity.

Jesus' proposal, based on the message of the reign of God, is contrary to the position of Judaism. For in Jesus' time, the Jewish religion was highly structured by the literal interpretation of the law, by countless moral precepts, and by too many ritual norms and strict rules of purity. These rules sought to maintain fidelity to God, but they were often applied in a legalistic and exclusionary manner, forgetting the value and compassion towards people, a warning that God had already given them through the prophets: "*For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings*" (Hosea 6:6). And Jesus reaffirmed this when he ate and openly associated with tax collectors and sinners: "*Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance'*" (Matthew 9:11-13).

The Roman Empire also violated human dignity when it invaded territories with violence, massacring and imposing its power through military force and intimidation of the weak and defenseless population. The Palestinian territory was occupied by Rome to be exploited, but in the face of the people's indignation, they were subjected to severe repression and treated as inferiors. Abusive taxes were levied: "*Some soldiers also asked him, saying, 'And what shall we do? And he said to them, 'Do not*

extort money from anyone or accuse anyone falsely, but be content with your wages" (Luke 3:12-13). Illegitimate authorities want taxes, and God comes for our dignity: "*Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's*" (Mark 12:17). Dignity that cost Christ his painful passion and cruel crucifixion (Mark 15:15-20).

Dignity demands the moral and just obligation of rulers. Even in dictatorial and tyrannical systems, the right to dignity demands compassion for the sick (Mark 1:31; 2:16-17) and for the poor (Mark 12:44), as a priority duty (Mark 14:7) and the focus of the powerful (Mark 10:21); the innocent represent Jesus (Mark 9:37), and those afflicted by disease (Mark 5:34) and demoniacs (Mark 1:34, 39) demand attention. The Gospel restores the dignity of the marginalized (Mark 2:12; 5:15) and interacts with sinners and tax collectors (Mark 2:16). Jesus himself heals lepers (Mark 1:41), the blind (Mark 8:32), and beggars (Mark 10:46). The mission to heal and restore (Mark 6:13) are the clear signs of the faith of those who live in Jesus (Mark 16:17-18).

5. Social transformation

Mark offers profound implications for the transformation of the situation endured by the humble and helpless people of Palestine. Perhaps the political image of a kingdom means nothing to us, but for those in Jesus' time, it implied justice, liberation, and a challenge to the structures of power. Talk of a new kingdom was a relief to the marginalized, the sick, and the excluded. And hearing that it was approaching awakened the hope that an authority greater than the Roman and Jewish collaborationists would burst onto the scene.

Moreover, the parable of the growth of the seed (Mark 4:26-29), which appears only in this Gospel, is the revelation that the kingdom of God is instituted by divine grace, that is, by the work of God, without the intervention of human beings with their rules of power. The apostolate that sows the word does not control or accelerate the destiny of a community, as religious leaders sought to influence by manipulating the people. The new understanding is that "*the seed sprouts and grows without him knowing how*" (Mark 4:27).

With the Anointed One comes God's time against the kingdom of human beings (Mark 1:15). The transformation is to change an exploitative, aggressive regime that causes much pain and suffering for the kingdom of love, justice, and service. It is to move from an imperial throne to the reign of the cross and grace. In the Roman Empire, power came from the emperor, a human being who proclaimed himself "son of God" (*divi filius*) and "lord" (*kyrios*), as declared by the senate on coins and official documents. In the kingdom of God, power comes from heaven, which acts through his Son (Mark 1:1).

The reign of men is institutionalized in military force, control, and domination. The government of God's kingdom is organized for service, justice, and mercy (Mark 10:42-45). The purpose of God's kingdom is to restore life, heal the sick, free captives, and reconcile everyone, especially the most vulnerable (Mark 2:5-12). This is masterfully described in the case of the man who was tormented by demons (Mark 5:1-20).

While the empire excludes, the kingdom of God is inclusive. Tyranny oppresses the poor, overtaxes them, and creates a hierarchical society. Jesus draws close to the poor, the marginalized, the sick, and sinners, and he builds relationships with women and children, whose role in the community was disregarded. Jesus restores health and dignity to those whom the Jews consider unclean (Mark 1:40-42). Surrounding himself with tax collectors and sinners, seen as traitors and corrupt, Jesus calls them to change their lives and incorporates them into his ministry (Mark 2:15-17). He shows that with his grace, the impure is purified and the rejected are restored and

incorporated into society (Mark 5:25-34). The empire uses religion to maintain administrative and social control, to manipulate human beings, and to legitimize power. Jesus denounces the hypocrisy and corruption of religious leaders and the powerful (Mark 7:6-8), such as turning the house of prayer into a den of thieves by selling and buying in the temple (Mark 11:15-17).

For despots, the cross was a symbol of punishment and humiliation. In Jesus, it is a sign of surrender, service, love, redemption, and confession of faith (Mark 15:39). It is not about violence and revenge, but reconciliation. Roman power is temporary. God's power, on the other hand, is eternal and life-giving. Jesus' reign overcomes death with his life through his resurrection (Mark 16:6-7).

Social transformation is a change from the temporary and earthly messianic reign, according to the Jewish conception, to the Messiah, the Son of God (Mark 1:15). There is a shift from the human Messiah to the Anointed One, the Son of God (Mark 1:1). Jesus confronts those responsible for suffering and pain, poverty and disease, unclean spirits (Mark 1:24; 3:11) and demons (Mark 1:34, 39), who attack Jesus and the apostles (Mark 3:15; 6:12-13). Through social transformation, judgment is brought against the Jewish and Roman authorities who serve the empire of evil, and their work is replaced by the mission of loyal servants (Mark 10:45) and producers of healing and good (Mark 6:53-56).

6. Social conscience

Today, we understand social conscience to mean solidarity and empathy for the pain of others and acting to help alleviate suffering. It means putting oneself in the other person's place to understand their situation, what they are feeling, and how they feel. The source of social conscience is understanding and compassion. The early Christian communities developed social consciousness in fraternity because they understood that they shared the image and likeness of God and that in Christ they became children of God. Brotherhood, reflected in individual and collective actions, contributed to the early church's impact on a society dominated by Roman culture and Judaism. The social conscience of the early Christians was very sensitive to the injustices, poverty, marginalization, and class differences caused by the social norms of the empire and the religious practices of Judaism.

Generous people are known as altruistic, and philanthropic people are those who sympathize with humanitarian causes. For its part, the displays of affection that flourish in relationships between people who like each other are popularly

known as empathy. But in reality, empathy is formed in human beings from the beliefs inherited from the family, social group, and community where the person has developed. Empathy is intuition, instinct, and the clairvoyance that a person possesses to distinguish the energy that moves in places, captures smells, perceives colors, recognizes intentions, reads thoughts, and discerns the experiences of the people around them.

Empathy is strengthened when you connect more authentically with your loved ones, as something natural and innate in all living beings, to be more effective in defending your life and that of your environment. Life is individual and social, of interrelationships, exchanges, and adaptation, for the survival and improvement of humanity and all creation. John Wesley said, "*The world is my parish,*" and emphasized that we should do all the good we can, by all means, in all ways, in all places, at all times, with all people, all the time. The world that civilization has sought to build would once again be like the original Eden, full, vital, of equality, of spontaneous evolution, without wounds or losses, and it would clarify the understanding and compassionate attention to all coexistence of life with generous kindness: "*clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience*" (Colossians 3:12).

In the early Christian communities, it was affirmed that genuine and authentic faith is demonstrated through works of compassion: "*Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world*" (James 1:27). This means that Christianity developed a form of community social assistance,

without openly rebelling against Rome, but proclaiming freedom through the power of solidarity and community commitment for the good of all, even slaves, as Paul did when he urged that the slave Onesimus be received "*no longer as a slave, but as a beloved brother*" (Philemon 1:16). Gone were the unjust social structures and deepest inequalities of the Roman Empire.

The change in social consciousness was as much for Judaism as it was for the Romans, in the acceptance of faith (Mark 7:28-29), the demoniac of Gerasa (Mark 5:1-20), from national Judaism to universal faith. Social consciousness is a change of attitude (Mark 1:17-18; 2:14) and a restoration of dignity (Mark 1:42; 2:12), it is a choice for life (Mark 3:4-5) and the natural growth of the kingdom of God (Mark 4:27), it is promoting change (Mark 5:20), overcoming evil (Mark 9:27), bringing order to chaos (Mark 4:41; 5:13), discerning and reasoning (Mark 3:22-30), spotting the enemy, and valuing diversity and unity (Mark 9:38-41). It is being active (Mark 3:15; 6:7), with spiritual power (Mark 13:11), serving (Mark 9:35), without seeking privileges (Mark 10:37), and working in obedience until the end (Mark 16:15-20).



III. LUKE AS KERYSSO
A WORSHIP OF
WORSHIP AND PREACHING

1. Jerusalem, a place of worship

Even today, Jerusalem continues to be a visited and populous center of religious worship in the world. The three monotheistic religions of the planet, and the only three that have literature inspired by God, are based in the holy city. Among the meeting points for Christian worship is the Holy Sepulcher, the only place where the tomb is empty. The Via Dolorosa, Jesus' path to crucifixion. The Mount of Olives, where Jesus instructed his disciples and ascended to heaven. The Cenacle, the room where the Last Supper took place. The Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus spent the night before his death. In addition, other sites in the city bear traces of Christianity, such as the Christian quarter, shrines, monasteries, and cathedrals of various denominations.

This spiritual place of frequent pilgrimage had its first settlements in the 4th century, before the Christian era. The Canaanites, Jebusites, and Israelites contributed to the consolidation of the city. The traces of history recall the footsteps of ancestral beliefs and different ceremonial rites. Here lie the remains of diverse cultural expressions and the vestiges of the

empires that have coveted it. The city bears witness to invasions, attacks, and the times it has been destroyed with insensitive and painful cruelty. Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Muslims, Crusaders, Egyptians, Ottomans, British, Jews, among others, have settled in Jerusalem to express their religiosity, impose their strategies of control, and govern with their political structures, subjecting the entire population to their interests.

God continued to lead a people until they were well prepared and at the right moment to send the Redeemer (Luke 1:17). The revelation came step by step in a progressive manner. Therefore, that tent is similar to the Church, where God dwells through the Holy Spirit. We must invite Jesus (Luke 24:29-31) so that our hearts may burn with his word, and we may recognize him in the breaking of bread (Luke 24:35). Christ is a place of divine nature for the dwelling of the living. Indeed, Jerusalem was strengthened as a city of worship when King Solomon built the temple to make it the permanent and eternal dwelling place of God (1 Kings 8:13). The building of a house for God is a sign for the followers of Jesus, for the temple is a figure of Christ and the Church (1 Corinthians 6:19). Building the physical temple is related to the holiness of the body, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, and the responsibility of believers (Ephesians 2:21-22). In the temple, offerings are made to God, and in our bodies, thoughts and works are created for our surrender to God.

Before Jesus, the temple that was destroyed was rebuilt. After Jesus, the temple was destroyed, and even today, , only

an esplanade and a wall remain as relics. For Judaism, the sign of the Messiah is that he fulfills the mission of rebuilding the temple; for Christians, it is the fulfillment of Jesus' words: "*And to some who were talking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and votive offerings, he said, As for these things you see, the days will come when there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down*" (Luke 21:5-6), a warning known as Jesus' eschatological discourse.

The Gospel of Luke begins in the temple (Luke 1:8) and ends in the temple (Luke 24:53). Jesus' entire life and teachings revolve around the ascent to Jerusalem, a place of worship (Luke 1:41; 9:51). The announcements of John and Jesus, by divine decision, turn them into a cult of offering to God (Luke 1:5; 26). On the one hand, there is the priestly family, Zechariah and Elizabeth (Luke 1:5-25), anointed and worshippers (Luke 1:67-80). On the other hand, there are Joseph, Mary, and their son Jesus, initiators of a new covenant and familiar with praise (Luke 1:39-56) and worship (Luke 2:8-20), the temple (Luke 2:21-38, 41-52), and rituals (Luke 2:21-24). In the life of Jesus, Simeon and Anna appear in the temple as faithful worshippers (Luke 2:25, 36), with power in spiritual worship (Luke 1:15, 35, 41, 67; 2:25-35), figures of the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation and the manifestation of Jesus as the promised Messiah.

2. From Galilee to Jerusalem

Jesus' public ministry begins with preparations for his journey to Jerusalem. The purpose of going up to Jerusalem is to fulfill his mission of being handed over, suffering, dying, and rising again in accordance with God's plan of salvation. Luke is the evangelist who places the last temptation in the tower of the temple in Jerusalem, symbol of the city of worship: "*And he brought him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here'*" (Luke 4:9), as a sign that his mission was to end in the temple in a ritual sign of his Eucharistic sacrifice. Jerusalem, the city of worship, is the setting for the great dénouement as a ceremonial liturgy.

Jesus begins his ministry by passing through the various places of worship in Galilee on his way to his hometown, where he reveals God's plan for his task on earth (Luke 4:14-16). Thus, the entire ministry of preparation before embarking on the final journey to Jerusalem takes place in Galilee. In his first intervention, Jesus presents his mission (Luke 4:18-22), responds to some objections (Luke 4:23-30), performs miracles,

heals, casts out demons, and spreads the gospel of the kingdom of God (Luke 4:43-44).

In his work, he instructs his first disciples, chooses and sends out his apostles, and focuses his ministry on compassion for the poor, the marginalized, and those excluded from the main cities and places of Galilee (Luke 4:31-9:50). Jesus was prepared and waiting for the order to set out on the road (Luke 9:51). Literally, it reads: "And it came *to pass*, when the days of his ascension were fulfilled, that he set his face to go to Jerusalem." With all his strength, he has determined to "*go forward*," on a slope of having to "*ascend*" to reach his glory: "*to be received above*," in anticipation of divine glory.

From Luke 9:51 onwards, the Gospel repeatedly uses the terms going, ascending, setting out, and going to Jerusalem. The evangelist emphasizes the image of Jesus' ascent, in a conscious effort to complete his mission in Jerusalem. It is an act of obedience to the Father, and as such shows his followers the way of discipleship (Luke 14:27). He is pointing out that this itinerary is also the way of the Church, which continues its mission from Jerusalem to the whole world (Luke 24:47-49). The journey is not just a trip, but a living experience in the progress of growth, in the spiritual and ministerial life of God's plan (Luke 9:53). It literally says, "making his way to Jerusalem" (Luke 13:22). It means that he is building a path. As in the verses of Antonio Machado: "Wayfarer, there is no path, the path is made by walking. By walking, the path is made, and when you look back, you see the path that you will never tread again." It is like going doing the mission along the way. As he

travels, the plan of salvation is fulfilled. That is why, as he goes, he opens paths of healing, miracles, exorcisms, and preaches the kingdom of God. He is already saving until the full realization of God's plan (Luke 17:11). The journey is a continuous and progressive task, and in the end, he would complete the action with his passion, death, and resurrection. The journey goes from Galilee, through Samaria to Jerusalem (Luke 17:11). In his plan of salvation, he breaks down geographical boundaries, overcomes cultural differences, and puts an end to religious prejudices (Luke 18:31).

"Having said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem" (Luke 19:28). This indicates that Jesus leads the way, going ahead of his disciples, as a determined guide toward his destination. The march continues to the end, without stopping or turning back, because Jerusalem is the new beginning. From this place, the mission of the church will go out to the whole world (Acts 1:8). So, Galilee is the time of setting the scene (Luke 4:14), introducing the message (Luke 5:5), healings, resurrection (Luke 7:11), and testimonies (Luke 8:1). Then begins a long spiritual journey of reconciliation, from the firm decision to leave Galilee (Luke 9:51) to the moment of entering Jerusalem (Luke 19:28). In conversion (Luke 10:25; 12:20; 15:11; 19:1) there is worship (Luke 10:39, 42; 17:18), prayer (Luke 18:1) and word (Luke 11:28), then repentance (Luke 13:3), and a great celebratory dinner (Luke 14:15).

3. Reading of the Scriptures

The Gospel of Luke draws heavily on the Old Testament in order to present the story of Jesus as the fulfillment of God's plan revealed in the Jewish Scriptures. From the beginning, it alludes to the fulfillment of promises: "*things accomplished among us*" (Luke 1:1). Luke continues his consistency to the end, pointing to the understanding of the Scriptures as a necessary condition for believing in Jesus (Luke 24:27). Symbolically, the entire Gospel is a preaching of the word in a cultic celebration: "*Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures*" (Luke 24:45). It is an interpretation of the passion and resurrection in light of what is said about Jesus in the Old Testament.

Luke bases his account on biblical quotations, allusions, parallels, and typologies, as in the following comparisons: Deuteronomy 18:15 with Luke 7:16; 24:19. Isaiah 7:14 with Luke 1:31-33. Zechariah 9:9 with Luke 19:35-38. Psalm 2:7 with Luke 3:22; 9:35. Psalm 31:5 with Luke 23:46. In Luke, the history of Israel culminates, and the history of the Church begins in a transition of continuity with what began in the chosen people.

The past is united with the present and the future of the Church with the legitimate identity of God's plan of salvation.

On other occasions, the author adapts biblical quotations to Jesus' understanding and mission in light of Jewish writings (Luke 24:46-47). What interests the writer is that the reader has absolute certainty (ἀσφάλεια, *asphaleia*) of the historical and divine testimony of those who saw and heard Jesus and who transmitted and taught his message truthfully (Luke 1:1-4). The deeds of Jesus are true, which is why he uses the expression: ἐν ἡμῖν, *en hémin*, "*among us*" (Luke 1:1). Luke is the historical confirmation and verified foundation in the transmission of the apostolic tradition.

Luke uses the language of narrative models and themes from ancient promises, such as in the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) and the Benedictus (Luke 1:68-79) and quotations from the psalms (Psalms 98; 103; 132) and creates a parallel description with Hannah's song (1 Samuel 2:1-10). Jesus' childhood promotes the faith of Israel and is faithful to the covenant with Abraham and David with God (Luke 1:32-33), coinciding with the promises of 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and Isaiah 9:7. Simeon (Luke 2:29-32) pronounces the words of Isaiah (Isaiah 49:6). The audience in Christian worship perceives the connection between the readings in the Jewish synagogue and the events of the new way.

Jesus presents himself as the living fulfillment of God's plan (Luke 4:16-21), reads the Scripture from Isaiah 61:1-2, interprets it, and applies the message to himself: "*Today this*

Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21). s this when John sent his disciples (Luke 7:20-22). It is about the fulfillment in Jesus of the prophetic discourse (Isaiah 35:5-6). The language of Psalm 118:22 was applied at the conclusion of the parable of the wicked tenants (Luke 20:17). Luke also structures his writings by bringing in important figures from the Old Testament (Luke 9:30-31). When Jesus cleansed the temple (Luke 19:45-46), he met with no opposition because they knew the Scriptures (Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11). However, after Jesus began to preach in the light of their Scriptures, they rebelled against the new teaching (Luke 19:47-48). Luke presents Jewish history as being fulfilled in Jesus within God's plan of salvation, as revealed in the law, the prophets, and the psalms. That is why Luke uses the expression "*fulfilling what was written,*" as in Luke 4:21; 18:31; 22:37; 24:44-47), especially through the Greek verb πληρόω (plēroō), which means to fulfill, complete, or fullness.

Luke gives priority to the Scriptures: Mary's song (Luke 1:46-55) is from 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Zechariah's song (Luke 1:67-79) refers to Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 9:2. Simeon's song (Luke 2:29-32) is inspired by Isaiah 42:6; 49:6. John the Baptist (Luke 3:4-6) used Isaiah 40:3-5. Jesus reads Isaiah 61:1-2 during the service of the word (Luke 4:16) and preaches with reference to the text of Scripture (Luke 4:21). Jesus also quoted the commandments (Luke 18:20), and the ending is a great worship service, in which a complete and total worship service is performed (Luke 24:13-35), and after worshipping him, they returned to the temple to continue their praise (Luke 24:50-53).

4. Hearing the word

In human language, the word Scripture (γραφῆ, graphē) is used, which normally refers to the message written in letters and numbers of a language. In Luke's Gospel, Scripture is the written word of God's plan manifested in Jesus: "*Today this Scripture (graphē) has been fulfilled in your hearing*" (Luke 4:21). The graphē is an inspired word that needs revelation (Luke 24:27). Jesus himself deciphers the Scriptures by referring to his own identity as Christ and to his mission of passion and glory (Luke 24:45).

Another term Luke uses is ῥῆμα, rhēma (Luke 1:37). Literally, it means "for nothing will be impossible with God (ῥῆμα)." Mary responds, "*Let it be done to me according to your word (ῥῆμα)*" (Luke 1:38). ῥῆμα designates that the word of God breaks into history and fulfills what was promised (Luke 3:2). When the narrative says, "*But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart*" (Luke 2:19, 51), it means that she "kept all these words" (ῥήματα, rhēmata). These are words that carry salvific efficacy and are not mere verbal expressions. Hence, for Simeon, it is the fulfillment of that he expected from

God (Luke 2:29). The same is true of the women at the tomb, who were warned to understand Jesus' sermons: "*Then they remembered his words (ῥημάτων, rhēmatōn)*" (Luke 24:8). After the resurrection, they understood what Jesus was saying to them through prophetic announcements, which were authentic messages from God.

Luke also uses λόγος (Luke 4:32). Jesus says that the seed is the word (λόγος) (Luke 8:11) and immediately reveals that the goal is to hear the λόγος (Luke 8:15). When a woman voices admiration and devotion, Jesus responds: "*But blessed is she who hears the word (λόγος) of God and puts it into practice*" (Luke 11:28). This implies that Jesus is the bearer of the word (logos) of God, whose content is the message of the kingdom of God.

People gather to hear his word (Luke 5:1). Jesus' mission is to spread the word of God (λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ). Obedience to the word produces results (Luke 5:5-6), and their lives are transformed (Luke 5:10-11). Because the word is God's guaranteed message. Hearing the word is not just hearing the written text (γραφῆ, graphē), but receiving God's message (ῥῆμα, rhēma) and obeying the Λόγος (Lógos), which is God's transforming Word.

Luke's great contribution is that he links the history of salvation in Scripture (γραφῆ, graphē) with the history of the proclamation of the Gospel (ῥῆμα, rhēma), showing that the written Word is fulfilled and brought to life through Jesus (Λόγος, Lógos) in his Church. Listening to the Scriptures is fundamental in Luke's Gospel, because as a faithful

collaborator of Paul (Colossians 4:14), he knew its importance (1 Timothy 3:16-17), since Scripture has its origin in God and its purpose in the formation of the believer. With Luke, we read and listen to the biblical word, understand it, and preach it, within the apostolic succession, to keep the life of the Church alive (Romans 10:8). Faith is our response to Jesus and the driving force for fulfilling God's will. By listening to the Word, believing it, and doing it, the promise of salvation is fulfilled. The process of Christian life is to hear the word, understand it, and teach it. This is what we call the total plan of complete evangelization, because it encourages reading the Word, opens understanding, and responds to the obedience of transmitting the message to continue calling new witnesses.

In Luke, there are servants of the word (Luke 1:2), messengers of the word (Luke 1:19, 26), unbelievers of the word (Luke 1:20), faithful ones (Luke 1:38) blessed ones (Luke 1:45), prophets (Luke 1:67), and blessed ones (Luke 1:65). Hearers and keepers of the word (Luke 1:66; 2:19; 12:51). They give glory to God (Luke 2:9) and praise Him (2:15). They hear, ask questions, and respond (Luke 2:46-47). Good results are achieved (Luke 5:5), preachers arise (Luke 5:10), and people from all over are converted (Luke 5:6). Twelve are sent (Luke 9:2) and then seventy go out to preach (Luke 10:1), they hear Moses and the prophets (Luke 16:31), effectiveness of prayer (Luke 18:1-15) at the point of the sword (Luke 22:35-38).

5. New Covenant Supper

One of the details that arouse interest in the supper of the new covenant, in Luke's version, are the cups that represent two different moments of the Passover celebration, in the midst of the breaking of bread. In the first cup, Jesus declares that he will not drink again until after the arrival of the expected kingdom (Luke 22:17-18). It is the cup of definitive restoration in the Kingdom of God.

This is how Luke relates the first cup to the passage in the Exodus and the second cup to Christ's passage from death to life in the definitive redemption. Luke merges the Jewish Passover and the Christian supper into a single account, showing the transition from the old to the new covenant, with the cup in the sense of atonement (Luke 22:20). This second cup is that of the new covenant, with which Jesus seals a new relationship with God through his blood. This is in line with the teaching of Paul, from whom Luke possibly received his instruction (1 Corinthians 11:25).

In the Christian supper, Jesus' act of breaking (*ἔκλασεν*, *eklasen*) the bread and giving it to his disciples is a sign of

ecclesial communion (ἐκκλησία, ekklesia) and of Christ's living presence in the Church. For this reason, the disciples continued to perform the sign of the breaking of bread as a sacrament (Acts 2:42), so that participation is the continuity that Jesus makes in the giving of his body.

In community, bread is broken in memory of Christ, as a foretaste of the kingdom of God. It is a reminder that Christ walks with his Church (Luke 24:13–35). Jesus walks with his disciples, shares the Scriptures with them, and they recognize him in the breaking of bread (Luke 24:30–31). The living presence of Jesus is manifested in the gathering of believers, in the Word, and in the supper of the new covenant. As he did in the blessing of the loaves (Luke 9:16–17), the same words appear in Luke 22:19: *he took, blessed, broke, and gave* (Luke 14:15). Jesus invites people of all physical and social conditions (Luke 14:15–24). Eating bread in the kingdom of God means participating in salvation.

The New Covenant supper expresses the culmination of Jesus' ministry and anticipates his death as a redemptive act. Luke presents this moment not only as a ritual gesture, but as the institution of a new covenant between God and humanity, sealed with the personal sacrifice of the Son of God.

The bread and wine signify a new covenant, in which Jesus gives his body and blood in a redemptive sacrifice for forgiveness and salvation.

The Church experiences this love of God around the Lord's table: "*And every day they continued to meet together in the temple*

courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts" (Acts 2:46), as a sign of unity, as a foretaste of the eternal banquet (), when Jesus will drink again from the fruit of the vine in the Kingdom of God: "Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink, and be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized? And they said to him, 'We can'" (Matthew 20:22). Jesus replied, "You will indeed drink from my cup, and you will be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized" (Matthew 20:23). In this way, we disciples perpetuate his presence and his message in the community.

In Luke we find the inn (Luke 2:7; 22:11-13). Sitting down to eat (Luke 9:14). The table and eating, the offering and the tithe (Luke 11:37-42; 14:1; 21:1) provocation of the word (Luke 11:53-54). Working and healing (Luke 13:14). The supper (Luke 14:12-13) and the great supper (Luke 14:15-24). Rejoicing (Luke 15:22-24, 32). The banquet (Luke 16:19-31). Girding oneself and serving (Luke 17:7-10). House of prayer (Luke 19:46). Feast of unleavened bread (Luke 22:1,7). Cup of the new covenant (Luke 22:20), service (Luke 22:28-28), breaking of bread (Luke 24:35) and always praising (Luke 24:53) in the new covenant between God and his Church.

6. In permanent liturgy

Liturgy consists of rules and norms established by a group of people for the religious worship of a community that worships and praises God in the assembly of congregants. Etymologically, liturgy comes from the Greek λειτουργία, leitourgía, λαός, laós meaning people, and ἔργον érgon meaning work or action. It means service for the benefit of the community. Among the Jewish people, the law (Torah) guided and planned the form of worship, but with the arrival of Christianity, the manner and place of worship were reformed into a spiritual ministry. The central elements of Jewish worship were transformed, reinterpreted, and completed in the fullness of Christian liturgy.

The external precepts of conduct and ceremonial worship in Judaism, being modified by the new worship, were internalized by the action of the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:18-19). Jesus came to a liturgical act in the synagogue and sat down to teach, as the rabbis did, but on a spiritual level because of his divinity. Worship is no longer centered on the temple with sacrificial rites and the synagogue with the teaching of the law, but on the guidance and liberating action of the Spirit of the Lord.

The temple in Jerusalem, as the only place of sacrifice, was replaced by house meetings and later by local shrines, where Christ himself is the new temple and the Church, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit (Luke 2:21-38). The Levitical priesthood, mediator between God and the people, was replaced by Christ (Hebrews 4:14-16) and by the spiritual priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9), as the spiritual participation of the entire community of the baptized.

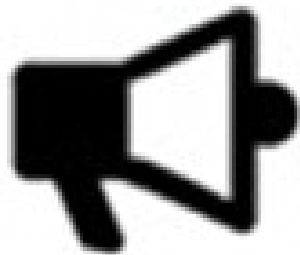
Old age and sterility threaten the liturgical continuation (Luke 1:8-10). In a liturgical act, the end of an ancient system of worship is announced, giving way to a new beginning of celebration in Christ's redemption. The transformation from Judaism to Christianity begins at the center of Jewish worship and gives way to the liturgy of the risen Christ. The hinge that serves as the transition from the Old to the New Testament is the public worship of the people, which moves from sacrifices in a temple to the celebration of life in the body of Christ, which is the Church, in a living, permanent, and definitive sacrifice in Jesus Christ. Therefore, in this Gospel, Jesus' ministry begins in Galilee and makes a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where the reason for his procession concludes, which is the sacrifice for the salvation of humanity (Luke 9:22). Jesus' journey is a liturgical walk (Luke 9:51). His redemptive destiny is inevitable in the fulfillment of the divine plan (Luke 13:33). Jesus becomes aware of his divine mission and prophetic destiny, which leads him to the cross, and he shares this with his disciples.

For the Jewish people, Jerusalem remains the center of worship of the God of Israel. For Christianity, Jerusalem is the

h y scene of the redemptive events of Jesus' life (Luke 23-24) and the starting point where the transformation from Judaism to Christianity took place. It was here that offerings and sacrifices were replaced by the supper of the new covenant (Luke 22:19-20), and moral and ritual laws gave way to the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). This is where the universal mission began (Acts 1:8) and is a symbol of the "*heavenly Jerusalem*" (Revelation 21:2). And for Islam, Jerusalem is the third holiest place, from where the prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven.

In the Church, history, faith, and hope are lived by its members in local churches, where the encounter between God and humanity takes place, the revelation and redemption of Christ is preached, worship and praise are offered, and the Lord's Supper is shared. While awaiting the second coming of the Lord, peace is invited and the lives of those who accept the message of Jesus are restored.

The center and focus of worship is Jerusalem (Luke 1-2). Preparations for worship include a situational assessment (Luke 3:1-4:13). Galilee represents the reality and need for miracles, healing, and teaching, which is where we arrive and where we begin our worship service (Luke 4:14-9:50). Luke is a permanent path of ascent to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51-19:28), to celebrate worship in the temple, praising and blessing God constantly (Luke 24:52-53). The unity of the church and perseverance are strengthened by worship (Luke 24:13-35), in a liturgy of signs, words, and actions to express faith in God and holiness.



IV. JOHN AS KERIGMA

A PLAN FOR EVANGELISM

1. Grace

Grace is a free gift from God (John 1:14). It is the word of God's love in Jesus. Therefore, when John uses the expression Word (Λόγος, Logos), it is Word, Message, or divine Expression. The message is Jesus, and Scripture is the instrument and channel that contains Jesus for humanity (John 1:1). In other words, God himself became man in the person of Jesus. Human nature was clothed with glory with the mind of God, to dwell among human beings (John 1:12). Before, the Mosaic law was based on obedience to its precepts and on the merit of fulfilling its commands. Now grace is a gift that is poured out infinitely (John 1:16-17).

Therefore, from the beginning John confirms that grace has its origin in God (John 1:1), who makes himself known in his Word (John 1:14) freely to believers (John 1:12, 1:16). The Word, who is Jesus, reveals the Father (John 1:18), with the sole purpose of our salvation (John 3:17). God's proposal is love, and his purpose is universal salvation, not condemnation. Jesus came to give abundant life: "*I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full*" (John 10:10). Giving life is equivalent to

salvation, eternal life, and communion with God, since without his grace, which is Christ, we are separated from him (John 15:5). Without Christ we can do nothing, but in vital union with Christ, which is His work of grace, everything is possible, because Christ is the only mediator between God and His creatures: "*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me*" (John 14:6). Only through His grace can we enter into communion with the Father. For God Himself is grace incarnate, opening the way to eternal life. In John, the Father's intention is salvation (John 6:39-40). God desires that all attain eternal life in Jesus (John 12:47). The sending of the Son has as its goal the salvation of the world, awaiting the response of human beings (John 3:18-19). To reject grace is to remain in darkness separated from God, because in John's version, without the grace of the incarnate Word, human beings remain separated from divine life.

In itself, grace is the presence of God incarnate in the person of Christ, who is "*full of grace and truth*" (John 1:14). Fullness means complete completeness. Because he is the Word (Λόγος), he is totality, and being the only begotten Son, he carries within himself the whole nature of God (John 3:16). John affirms that Jesus is also full "*of truth*" (John 1:14). The word truth in Greek is ἀλήθεια, alétheia, whose meaning is deeper than to say certainly, something with accuracy or sincerity as a human value. The truth in Jesus is the full, total, and complete revelation of the faithfulness of God himself. In Jesus, God is fully faithful to his word and his purpose.

Jesus asks the Father to sanctify the disciples through the truth, which is the word of God (John 17:17). To know the truth is to be transformed by Jesus Christ (John 10:28-29). Jesus reveals the divine substance and nature (John 8:28-29) and transmits what the Father gives him, in contrast to the devil, who is the father of lies (John 8:44). Jesus, the Son of God, is faithfulness and truth itself. His word and actions are trustworthy because they reflect divine reality.

Grace and truth in Christ indicate an overabundance of divine favor. The believer receives freely from the fullness of Christ (John 1:17). In Christ, a new covenant is inaugurated, no longer based on obligation but on the conviction of the gratuitousness of divine love. It is so much love that it shows us the face of God (John 1:18). The manifestation of grace is inseparable from the version of God revealed by Jesus. Grace is God making himself known and offering himself to human beings through his Son.

The incarnate Word makes himself known in word, wisdom, and humanity as a gift from God (John 1:1-18). The offer of grace is available (John 1:12). Jesus is full of grace and truth (John 1:14). From that grace we all draw (John 1:16) because grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17). The first disciples were evangelized (John 1:35-51). The signs and wonders are for believing (John 2:11). There must be a new birth (John 3:3) spiritually (John 3:5) to believe in eternal life (John 3:15). By the grace of love (John 3:16) the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep (John 10:11).

2. Sin

Sin is anything that separates us from God. And in John, what separates us from God is unbelief. Accepting Jesus is believing, and that faith unites us with God. Sin is refusing to receive God's revelation in Christ (John 3:18). The context of condemnation is in the scene with Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3:3). Being born again is the covenant of believing in God's messenger; it is the faith that opens the way to eternal life. Rejecting Jesus leads to condemnation, which is living separated from God.

Sin is the darkness in which humanity sleeps, because it is not in communion with God (John 3:19-20). In Judaism, sin is also a rupture in the relationship with God, which results in separation from the community and habitual conflict with oneself. But unlike the Christian faith, in Judaism, the cause of the fracture is disobedience to the Torah (the Law of God), it is moral transgression of the law.

In contrast, the Gospel of John considers sin to be not recognizing Jesus as the Son of God, who, through his sacrifice, undoes sin (John 1:29). For sin is the rupture of the relationship

with God by not believing in Jesus, the Son of God (John 16:8-9). Faith in Jesus eliminates the power of sin, because Christ is a light in his word (John 8:12) and is spiritual freedom from God (John 8:32). Sin is rejecting God's revelation in Christ; it is not believing in Jesus as the One sent by the Father (John 3:19-20). Sin is not an action or a bad deed; sin is living in darkness (John 9:41).

The sin of the Pharisees is the deliberate rejection of His Word, pretending to be right. That unbelief and rejection is not only a moral transgression, but the condition of being separated from God for not believing in His Son (John 15:4-6). Furthermore, sin prevents us from seeing the glory of God and prevents us from being disciples of Jesus (John 15:7-8). Discipleship is intrinsic to spiritual unity with Jesus and His Word, for without that connection, evangelism cannot be exercised (John 5:10).

Thus, sin is resisting the grace, truth, and light of Christ (John 8:24). To die is to be ignorant of Jesus' divine descent (John 15:21). Separation from God makes human beings guilty when they reject the Son, who is the manifestation of the Father (John 16:8-9). Unbelief is what separates us from God's love and life (John 8:34).

Sin is foolishness that oppresses a person, while the power of the Son sets them free (John 8:36). Full freedom comes only in communion with Jesus, who is the author of life and the conqueror of death, destroying the sin of the world (John 1:29). Sin cannot be overcome by human effort alone, nor is the saving

faith of Christ by the pure will of the believer. The ability to believe and remain in saving faith sur es any human merit, because salvation is the redemptive work of Christ's love on the cross for humanity: "*When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, 'It is finished.'* And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit" (John 19:30). The debt is paid!

He asks us to straighten the way of the Lord (John 1:23), and at the beginning he purifies the temple, which is his body (John 2:13-22). All have sinned (John 3:20; 8:7) and are going to die (John 8:21, 24), enslaved (John 8:34), because they are children of the devil, a murderer and the father of lies (John 8:44), which is why they accuse Jesus (John 8:46, 49; 9:16, 24-25, 31). They are concerned about sin in others (John 9:2, 34), but Jesus confirms that they all have sin (John 9:41; 15:22, 24). The Spirit will convict them (John 16:8-9; 19:11) and the forgiveness of sins involves them all (John 20:23).

3. God

God is the common term used to name the supreme being, creator, sovereign, absolute, transcendent, perfection, infinite, goodness, and fullness. He is recognized as the first cause and ultimate reality of the universe. Pure intelligence. Creator of the order of universal laws, of the invisible and the visible. He is the origin and order, sustainer of all that exists and proceeds from his essence. God makes himself known in his creation because of his divine nature of truth and love. There is nothing above God. He exists by himself, and although he is invisible to the physical world, he expresses himself in the spiritual and existential dimension to communicate through signs and signals that human beings understand.

In John, the mystery of creation is revealed to us more clearly through Jesus (John 1:1-4). John opens his gospel with the affirmation that the Word is eternal, that it existed before creation, that it is divine and is with God and is God, referring to Christ, who is the agent of creation. Creation itself is a personal work of the eternal Son, from whom life comes. Thus, creation is made so that all people, in all ages and cultures, may

know God (Romans 1:20). Creation is the universal scripture and natural preaching for those who do not yet have access to the revealed word of his Son Jesus Christ (John 1:18). In this way, Christ fully reveals God; he is his visible image, eternal, sovereign, and absolutely preeminent. However, to recognize God in Jesus, it is not enough to know his wonders and miracles; one must believe that his face is God acting in human history (John 14:9). Whoever recognizes Jesus as the Son of God made man knows God, because Jesus and God share the same divine nature.

Furthermore, Jesus is also an extension of God in the reproduction of His deeds: "*Whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise.*" Jesus can give life by raising the dead (John 11:43-44), and that is only God's power, and Jesus does it and says, "*I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even after death. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this, Martha?*" (John 11:25-26). It is a demonstration of God's power. Jesus knows everything just as God does: (John 2:24-25). At the wedding in Cana, he knew that his time had not yet come (John 2:4), but later, while in Jerusalem, he discerned with full awareness and purpose that the time of his passion had come (John 13:1). God manifests his perfect love and waits for the response of faith from believers (John 16:30).

Since God is always present in Jesus and Jesus is with us, we must honor his presence in worship (John 4:23-24). In this way, the lives of believers are sustained by Christ (John 14:19-20) and the Holy Spirit seals the divine presence and in the believer (John 16:7). The name of God shares with the Father, the

Son, and the Holy Spirit the same divine nature in that it creates and gives life, knows deeply all that is human and all that is future, dwells in all, and is not limited by the physical. The standard of the relationship between human beings and God is not knowledge of God, but the love they profess for one another (John 13:34). To love is to participate in the life of Christ (John 15:5). In John, God is defined by his love, which is demonstrated in salvation (John 3:16). And salvation is defined as the coexistence of human beings with eternal life, which is to participate in the very life of God from now on.

The Father desires communion with his children (John 17:3). Therefore, eternal life is not simply living forever, but living in relationship with God. Eternal life begins now, not after death. The Word is God (John 1:1). God is love, and his purpose is that we live in love (John 5:42). God, because of his love for the world, sent his Son for salvation (John 3:16-17), and if we do not believe in his Son, God's wrath will come upon us (John 3:36). God is Spirit (John 4:24), and the dead will hear his voice and live (John 5:25). God teaches (John 6:45) his doctrine (John 7:17), and whoever hears Christ hears God (John 8:47) and knows God, who is eternal life (John 17:3); God is also our Father (John 20:17). The work of God is to believe in Christ (John 6:29).

4. Christ

After John speaks of the divine nature of Jesus (John 1:1-18), he moves on to the redemptive mission of the Messiah or Christ, the anointed one of God. Jesus means Savior; Messiah is anointed in Hebrew and Christ in Greek. The mission of Jesus, who is the divine Word, is fulfilled in his death as the Lamb. The Word and the Lamb are one and the same: "*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us*" (John 1:14), so that redemption might be a new covenant with humanity. With Israel, it was from God to the people (Leviticus 26:12, Jeremiah 30:22, Ezekiel 36:28), but with the Church it is from Father to children (John 1:12). Jesus explicitly states that we share the same father with him (John 20:17).

The symbol of the old covenant was represented in the sacrifice of a lamb (Exodus 12:1-14; 29:38-42; Leviticus 4:32-35; 14:12-13), where the sacrifice meant liberation from slavery, the blood of the covenant, and the identity of the restored people. But when the culminating moment of God's plan arrived, the sign of the new covenant was the Lamb who offers salvation for all (John 1:29). Furthermore, he encouraged his own

disciples to follow the Lamb, giving them the sign that this was the redeeming, the expected Messiah or Christ, of whom he had spoken (John 1:35-37). It is an invitation to leave the old way of believing and begin to be disciples of Jesus. Jesus' work is different from that of the old covenant (John 1:15-16). Jesus dies on the cross and rises again in a definitive and perfect sacrifice, which God decided would replace the animal sacrifices and offerings of the old covenant (John 1:29). Furthermore, in the same salvific scenario, John calls on the baptized to live accordingly in a permanent relationship with Christ, to accept the call to follow Jesus as disciples of their new and divine Master (John 1:36).

In the Gospel of John, the disciples of John the prophet follow Jesus because he is the Messiah, the Christ announced and awaited in the old covenant (John 1:40-41). Because Andrew confessed to his brother his encounter with the Messiah (John 1:41), Peter comes to Jesus (John 1:42). After Philip's personal encounter with Jesus and his call to be his disciple (John 1:43-44), Philip shared his testimony of his saving faith with his friend Nathanael (John 1:46). Without entering into controversy, he says, "Do not believe me, but see for yourself" (John 1:49). Before Jesus, everyone bows down; no one resists the divine love of Jesus. Thus, faith begins with an initial concern, is enlivened by the witness of evangelizing faith, deepens through direct contact with Jesus, and perseveres to the end as one continues to walk with Jesus.

Therefore, the evangelist's task is to lead new prospects into the presence of Christ. Jesus takes care of the rest, hoping

that everyone will attain the peace, joy, and harmony that salvation brings. As the Samaritan woman did: "*Could this be the Christ?*" (John 4:29), so that they themselves may have their own personal experience with Jesus. The same thing happens in the face of the uncertainty and unbelief of the apostle Thomas, who finally surrenders, expressing his testimony of faith: "*My Lord and my God!*" (John 20:28). In John's Gospel, it is Jesus himself who reveals that he is the Messiah: "*I know that Messiah is coming, who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.*" Jesus said to her, "*I am he, the one who is speaking to you*" (John 4:25-26). Jesus explicitly declares himself to be the Christ. After healing the man born blind, "*Jesus said to him, 'You have seen him, and the one who is speaking to you is he.'*" He said, "*I believe, Lord,*" and he worshiped him" (John 9:37-38). In the act of evangelization, there is no messianic secret, nor is anything implied, but rather the messianic identity is affirmed with divine authority and the power of Jesus himself.

The Gospel of John presents Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29, 36). The disciples followed him because he was the Messiah, the Christ (John 1:41). Jesus himself reveals that he is the Messiah (4:25-26; 9:37-38). Jesus manifested his glory through signs (John 2:11). Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world (John 4:42), he is the Son of the living God (John 6:69; 11:27). Jesus is the light (John 1:4, 9:5), the living water (John 4:11-14); the living bread (John 6:51); the door (John 9:10); the good shepherd (John 10:11); the resurrection and the life (John 11:25); Jesus is eternal life (John 17:3).

5. Faith

Faith is the trust placed in someone or something. It is adherence to a perception of reality that is taken as true and gives meaning to personal and group life. Expressions of faith have been recorded since the dawn of humanity. Archaeology suggests that the first signs of faith appeared when humans began to express their invisible or transcendent reality, some 100,000 to 70,000 years ago. From that time on, there are traces of burial sites, cave paintings of sacred animals, rituals, and symbols. There are signs of beliefs in higher and spiritual forces. Totems and amulets representing protection, spirits, or invisible powers can be seen. Thus, since prehistoric times, humans have exhibited religious behavior in the expression of their faith.

Faith is each person's response to God's purpose. Faith is living in awareness and obedience to the divine plan of salvation. Through faith, we join Jesus, the Son of God, and it is by faith that we persevere in Christ to participate in eternal life (John 17:3).

The Jews thought that faith was based on the blood ties that united them to God, without counting or promoting

conversion or personal adherence to Christ, nor were they interested in discipleship and evangelism (John 8:32-34). On the other hand, occasional faith does not reflect true faith either (John 4:20). It is seasonal faith that depends on how the believer feels. In fact, emergency faith is used in times of imminent danger, in the face of catastrophes and natural phenomena (John 6:26). Miracles are invoked without recognizing Christ.

In contrast, saving faith is the faith that springs from the gospel. It is the faith that rescues the sinner from spiritual death and leads him to live in the grace of God. Through saving faith, the person achieves transformation. The believer focuses on Jesus as his only Savior (John 3:16), reads, understands, and teaches the Word (John 20:31). The saved believe in the commandments and practice them (John 14:23). Saving faith generates new birth (John 3:3). Those who have mature spiritual salvation persevere in Christ (John 15:4-5), bear fruit (John 15:8), and receive the privilege of being children of God (John 1:12-13). Through saving faith, we believe and trust in Jesus (John 3:16). Real faith translates into a personal relationship with Jesus. Therefore, neither intellectual, cultural, nor technological faith saves, although they coincide with faith in many of their purposes, coexisting together for the good of humanity in both the spiritual and physical realms.

Faith and science are similar in that both seek truth. Science in the physical realm and faith in the meaning of life. There is no science without literature, just as there is no faith without the written word. Faith finds meaning in the order of the universe, while science marvels at its functioning. Faith guides life

toward good, technology improves well-being and quality of life. Technology solves problems, faith offers purpose. Technology overcomes limitations; faith leads to transcendence. Through faith and science, human beings are encouraged to create, imagine, and transform the environment. Both faith and science are governed by decisions, relationships, behaviors, values, and priorities. The evangelizing message was transmitted more quickly through the use of the science and technology of the time, such as papyrus and parchment and transportation for mobilization. Today, there are digital Bibles and applications for evangelization. Faith demands moral consistency, and ethics normalizes science and technology. Both faith and science require judgment, prudence, and conscience. Misinterpreted faith can divide, and misuse of technology can isolate; both must have a good conscience. Faith leads to the future of eternal life, while technology looks toward progress through innovation and scientific advances.

The words of Jesus are life (John 6:63), life that translates into salvation (John 12:44-50). Eternal life is attained by believing in the Son (John 3:36) and not in one's own personal glory (John 5:44; 12:43). The Son has the authority of the Father to give life (John 5:19-23). Passing from death to life comes from believing in the words of Jesus (John 5:47). Jesus' disciples and their successors are bearers of the same salvation through words (John 17:20). The gospel, with its signs, has been written for us to believe in Christ (John 20:31).

6. What you must do

The structure of John's gospel represents a horseshoe shape, because the way the themes of Jesus are organized forms a U, interpreting the descent and ascent of Jesus. It is the image of a curved line that goes down and then up. Jesus comes from above from eternity and returns in glory in God's eternal plan. The illustration consists of a descending route, which curves at its base and then rises in a straight line. They are like two mountains joined in the valley by a river. The person descends one of the mountains, immerses himself in the waters, crosses the river, and climbs the mountain opposite. Jesus Christ, being in heaven, descends to earth and ascends back to heaven. This is very similar to the hero's journey, which describes the personal transformation of someone who leaves their comfortable and familiar everyday life, faces a series of events and vicissitudes, and receives help from a mentor to face challenges, supported by their friends. He enters a deep cave, overcomes obstacles, emerges, and receives a reward. The return journey is more risky than the outward journey; he faces persecution and, in the end, overcomes a great trial that purifies him. The character, returns to his world with honor

and glory, which allows him to transform his reality and that of his people.

The descent is for those who believe in Jesus, and the ascent is for those who already believe in Jesus. The unbeliever waits for miracles to believe in Christ; the believer, having seen the maker of signs, faithfully follows the path of the redeemer and testifies in writing that Jesus is the Lord (John 21:24).

The prologue and epilogue are climactic texts in John's Gospel. One depicts the incarnation of the descent, and the other depicts the prodigious summit of the ascent. They are the two points of the horseshoe or the symbol of the letter **U**, similar to the diaeresis. Both the prologue and the epilogue seem separate from the body of the book, as if they had nothing to do with the unfolding of Jesus' ministry and the events of his passion, death, and resurrection. However, they are two important points of connection between divinity and humanity. The prologue shows that Jesus comes from heaven to earth, and the epilogue confirms that Jesus leaves earth and goes to heaven. Thus, in the prologue, we discover the divine and eternal identity of the Word (John 1:1–18). Meanwhile, the epilogue places the risen Jesus in Galilee with his disciples, using the abundant catch of fish as a sign to continue his ministry (John 21:1–14).

Between the prologue and the epilogue lies the crux of Jesus' public ministry, in seven signs (1:19–12:50), along with his farewell discourse and its fatal consequences (John 13:1–19:43). Between the signs and his exhortation there is a break in the

narrative. Jesus begins to teach his disciples a tortuous and painful path of ascent that they must walk with faith. It is as if Jesus were embarking on the return journey to the Father with many trials and controversies, until he suffered the passion and death (John 13-19) and then the triumphant resurrection (John 20). With the seven signs, the disciples and their prospects believe (John 2:11). The goal is to awaken faith (John 20:31). The entire Gospel of John has the sole purpose of making people believe in Jesus and, through that faith, receive eternal life.

The seven signs (John 2:1-11 to John 11:1-44) are to convince his disciples that Jesus is Lord, Anointed One, and Savior (John 6:68-69). To the disciples who already believe in his plan of salvation, he explains the demands of the kingdom of heaven, whose ultimate consequences lead to giving one's life so that the message reaches the unconverted (John 13-17). At the end, there is the arrest, trial, and crucifixion (John 18-19). He suffers the painful passion, death, and burial, and then receives the glorious resurrection (John 18-20). His divinity is seen in his voluntary surrender and in his victorious battle over death.

The Gospel of John is about believing who Jesus is (John 2:1-12:50). The second part of the Gospel is to do (John 13:1-17:26), so that they can bear the consequences of Jesus' trial, crucifixion, and burial (John 18:1-19:42) and the appearances after the resurrection (John 20:1-21:25). That is why we must read the Bible, understand it, and teach it. Because the words of the Gospel guide us to be in God's love and in relationship with our brothers and sisters in faith.



**V. ACTS OF THE APOSTLES
AS CHARISM
THE ACTIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

1. Promise of the Holy Spirit

Just as Jesus is God's promise, through the Messiah, for the salvation of the whole world: "*For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him*" (John 3:17), the Holy Spirit is God's promise to Christians in the Church of Jesus Christ, as confirmed by the risen Jesus: "*And while they were together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, you heard from Me. For John truly baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now*" (Acts 1:4-5). The Holy Spirit consolidates Christ's redemptive action, for He is the seal of guarantee in the work of evangelization and the permanent guide for the Church's journey: "*Therefore, being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this which you see and hear*" (Acts 2:33). It is God's gift, for the testimony of his divine presence and power on earth.

Christ's presence is now spiritual, without limits of time and space. The Spirit of Jesus gives power, comfort, and guidance to every believer. Jesus, once glorified, receives from the

Father () the authority and power to send the Holy Spirit. The glory of the Son is seen in his power to spread the Holy Spirit among all believers and throughout the Church. Jesus, with his Spirit, empowers the Church. The flow of the Holy Spirit among the congregation is the sign that Christ reigns and acts today in his Church.

The mission of the Church is to proclaim and build the Kingdom of God on earth, making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world through evangelization, teaching, worship, charisms, service, and fruitful communion, thanks to the continuous presence of the Holy Spirit.

For since Jesus' public ministry, his power flowed from the Holy Spirit: *"The one on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit"* (John 1:33). That same power continues in the Church through the living presence of the Holy Spirit, announced by Jesus: *"that they should wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, you heard from me"* (Acts 1:4), giving continuity to the prophetic fulfillment: *"and after this I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days I will pour out my Spirit"* (Joel 2:28-29).

In the events of Pentecost, Peter explains that they are seeing the fulfillment of God's promise. The last days are being lived in Acts 2:17-21, with spiritual awakening, no longer only individually as in the old covenant, but to all believers without

distinction. It is the fulfillment of the Father's promise announced by Jesus in Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:8. The same promise that God had already announced that He would pour out His Spirit upon His Church, anticipating the event of Pentecost: "*I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will put my Spirit within you* (Ezekiel 36:26-27), it is the Spirit that transforms the heart to one obedient to God: "*I will pour out my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing upon your descendants*" (Isaiah 44:3), for current and new believers.

Jesus acted by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:2), assuring them of the Father's promise (Acts 1:4; 2:33), baptism with the Holy Spirit, as opposed to baptism with water (Acts 1:5). It was about the Holy Spirit coming upon the disciples (Acts 1:8). The time was "*not many days hence*" (Acts 1:5). It was a promise they could wait for with perseverance in prayer, through obedience and faith (Acts 1:12-14). The wait was ten days, when "*they were all with one accord in one place*" (Acts 2:1).

2. Power to testify

The term power in Greek is δύναμις, dynamis, which translates as special strength and divine gift to do God's work. It refers to the power of God in the deeds of Jesus and the apostles. It is the spiritual capacity, power, or active energy emanating from the Holy Spirit. Witness in Greek is μάρτυς, martus. It refers to someone who attests to the oral or written deeds of Jesus Christ. When someone declares who Jesus is, what he did, and how he transformed their life, they are called a witness to the message of Jesus Christ, and if they give their life for the sake of the gospel, they are also a witness. The Greek term πρεσβεύω (presbeuō) means to act as an official representative and to carry an authoritative message on behalf of God. The authority of Jesus and that of evangelists is the same when his message is faithfully transmitted. Christ testifies of the Father, we testify of Jesus Christ. Jesus spoke what he heard from the Father, we speak what we receive from Christ. Therefore, to evangelize is to make a direct, urgent, and loving call for all to turn to God.

Today, Jesus' invitation continues through his evangelizers, who make the truth visible with the authority of Jesus: "*you will be my witnesses, μάρτυρες*" (Acts 1:8). The sacrifice of Stephen shows the meaning of witness, as he proclaims the message of Jesus and dies because of his preaching (Acts 22:20). In this case, we see that Stephen is a witness because of his death and Paul is a witness because he witnessed it.

It is clear that power is for testifying with the naturalness of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. It is about acting in such a way that one's actions confirm the message of Jesus (Acts 2:43). The witness with power must speak the message of Jesus Christ with boldness (Acts 4:31). This means that the mission of the church continues to be God's work, through his witnesses (Acts 5:12).

The authority exercised by the Church does not rest on itself, as an assembly of believers in Christ Jesus, but because God continues to use evangelists as faithful witnesses of his message, for the transformation of the lives of unbelievers into believers: "*and the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord*" (Acts 11:21). The early church was powerful because it was spiritual, and today our Church will be effective if it remains connected to the same spiritual source, just like the first witnesses of the evangelizing message: "*Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than men'*" (Acts 5:29). Total loyalty to God comes from spiritual witness. For when temporal customs and human authority conflict with God's work, the witness of Christ must choose

divine obedience, even if it means the cost of his life, which makes him a powerful martyr for the Word.

The mission of the Church depends on the power (*dýnamis*) of the Holy Spirit, who empowers its members to witness. For when we ask ourselves how, with what resources, and how far the mission of the Church extends, the answers are found in the power to witness that the Holy Spirit grants. The emphasis is on the power that identifies the witness, for witness is the result of power. The message must be proclaimed with bold courage, clear truthfulness, and prophetic wisdom. That is why we must forget about evangelization as spectacle and spectacular evangelizers, who overshadow the character, conduct, and proclamation of the faith.

The power of the Holy Spirit is to be witnesses (*μάρτυρες*, *martyres*). We must have motives, endurance, and strength to endure martyrdom (Acts 1:6-8), even though we do not know the times (*chronous*, *χρόνους*) or seasons (*καιρῶν*, *kairous*) that manifest the time of the Lord. The power is not for performing signs, *σημεῖον*, *sēmeion*, (Acts 3:12), or wonders, *τέρατα*, *terata*, simply (Acts 5:12). Nor is the testimony focused on miracles, *δυνάμεις*, *dynameis* (Acts 19:11), but rather the power is to be witnesses, that is, martyrs (Acts 3:15), of the consequent threats (Acts 4:17), the beatings (Acts 5:40-42), and even death (Acts 7:58-60).

3. Fullness to speak

The word fill from the Greek πληρόω, pléroó, means to complete or satisfy. When Jesus predicts the destruction of Jerusalem, he is announcing divine judgment, because the time for evaluation has been completed, for these are days when the measure of judgment reaches its fullness: "*for these are days of retribution, so that all things which are written may be fulfilled, πλησθῆναι, plēsthēnai*" (Luke 21:22). That is, at that moment, the prophetic acts have fulfilled what they were supposed to speak of God. So many prophecies were given that they have now reached their peak.

At all times we must maintain the fullness of the Word in order to speak: "*all those present were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them the ability*" (Acts 2:4). The expression fullness, πληρότης plērótēs, of the Holy Spirit means that God prepares, equips, and sends the Church to evangelize. The fullness of the Word is the power to testify: "*you will receive power... and you will be my witnesses*" (Acts 1:8). The fullness is for speaking about God. And the fullness happens when the Holy Spirit comes

and fills the believer's whole life: *"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: rulers and elders of our people..."* (Acts 4:8). All filling of the Holy Spirit leads to the action of witnessing with vigor: *"After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly"* (Acts 4:31). The filling of the Holy Spirit is more than the conviction of receiving the Holy Spirit.

With the presence of the Spirit we have achieved conversion, while the filling of the Spirit is for mission: *"So Ananias went and found Saul, laid his hands on him, and said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit'"* (Acts 9:17). Saul's conversion was when he received the Holy Spirit on the road to Damascus. Then he received the filling of the Holy Spirit for the missionary work of evangelism, as an apostle to the Gentiles, a preacher of the gospel, and a chosen instrument: *"The Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is my chosen instrument to carry my message to the Gentiles and their kings and also to the people of Israel'"* (Acts 9:15).

Furthermore, the fullness is a grace that continues to be given: *"Saul, also known as Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit and looked intently at the sorcerer"* (Acts 13:9). The fullness of the Holy Spirit moves one to preach Christ: *"And immediately he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God"* (Acts 9:20). The disciples are filled and begin to speak. Jesus rose from baptism with the fullness, πλήρωμα, plērōma, of the Holy Spirit, to bear witness: *"Jesus, filled, πλήρης, plērēs, with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into*

the wilderness" (Luke 4:1). The disciples, filled with the Spirit, were chosen for service in the administration of the church's goods: "*Therefore, brothers, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task*" (Acts 6:3). God prepared Stephen with the fullness of the Spirit, and he stood firm in the faith until his death: "*But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God*" (Acts 7:55). The fullness of the Spirit is a sign of victory.

The event of conversion makes the believer available and teachable, so that God can fill him with the Holy Spirit. However, although everything is by God's grace, the filling of the Holy Spirit comes if we remain obedient to the Word (Colossians 3:16), if we ask without ceasing (Luke 11:13), if we cultivate holiness (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19). That is, if we allow the Holy Spirit to fully rule, direct, and order our lives (Acts 1:8; 4:31).

As a mighty wind filled the whole house (Acts 2:2), tongues like fire were distributed to each one (Acts 2:3), and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in other tongues (Acts 2:4), in the languages of each listener (Acts 2:8). The spiritual filling made them speak with confidence (Acts 2:14), and not only the apostles (Acts 4:1), but also the new believers (Acts 4:29-31) and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a city populated by tax collectors and sinners, who were accepting the new doctrine of Jesus (Acts 5:28; 17:6-9).

4. Spiritual direction

Spiritual direction is the continuous accompaniment that believers receive in order to walk faithfully within God's will, discerning, obeying, and acting according to the impulse of the Holy Spirit, who has been the formative agent, guide, and missionary force of the Church since its inception. From the beginning of the Christian community, the Holy Spirit not only sends, but also accompanies the internal process of faithfulness and obedience. Jesus' commandments to the nascent Church were transmitted "*by the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen*" (Acts 1:2), which reveals that divine guidance does not operate as isolated human instruction, but as spiritual mediation that sustains and leads the disciples.

The early Church did not receive a complete New Testament canon, but was initially guided through the Old Testament Scriptures, interpreted by the Spirit as the current and prophetic Word for mission (Acts 1:16; 2:17; 28:25). This shows that spiritual guidance is not subjectivism, but discernment based on the Word revealed and actualized by the Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who guides the believer's, from conversion to

forgiveness to faith, and directs them to obedience through baptism and the reception of the Spirit (Acts 2:38). Spiritual guidance begins when the believer not only believes but is incorporated into a walk guided by God. The Spirit not only instructs but also equips. He grants gifts to those who join the Church, activates their spiritual life, and enables them to serve and witness (Acts 2:38). This indicates that spiritual guidance includes identity formation and purpose activation, not just ethical advice.

The Spirit accompanies the consecrated not only with doctrinal clarity but also with spiritual courage in the face of adversaries, giving wisdom, inspired defense, and inner strength (Acts 4:8; 6:10; 7:51, 55; 21:11). Spiritual direction does not avoid conflict, but strengthens the believer to remain faithful within God's will even under pressure. The Spirit guides the exact moment of missionary action: He indicates, activates, confirms, and moves the disciple according to God's purpose (Acts 8:29, 39; 9:17, 31; 11:12). This teaches that spiritual direction is not passive accompaniment, but discernment that leads to concrete obedience and evangelizing movement.

The Spirit chooses, sends, and accompanies those whom God specifically calls to mission (Acts 13:2, 4; 16:6-7; 20:28). This confirms that spiritual direction also involves confirming callings, charting paths, and setting limits, as seen when the Spirit prevents or redirects paths (Acts 16:6-7), showing that guiding also means closing doors in order to open others according to God. Spiritual direction not only comforts, it also warns. The Spirit anticipates tribulations and prepares the

disciple's heart to remain faithful within God's purpose (Acts 20:23), revealing that spiritual accompaniment is preparation for persevering faithfulness, not for a faith without trials. In the care and guidance of congregational leadership, the Spirit guides the Church as a community, entrusting the pastoral care and spiritual supervision of God's people (Acts 20:28). This shows that spiritual direction is ecclesial and formative; we walk with others, under God's guidance, to sustain the faithfulness of the body of Christ.

The commandments come through the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:2), who guides the early church through the Old Testament Scriptures (Acts 1:16; 2:17; 28:25). He equips those who are being added to the church with gifts (Acts 2:38) and fills the consecrated with courage in the face of adversaries (Acts 4:8; 6:10; 7:51, 55; 21:11) and tells them when to act with the power of the gospel (Acts 8:29, 39; 9:17, 31; 11:12). He chooses missionaries and accompanies them (Acts 13:2, 4; 16:6-7; 20:28) and warns them of tribulations (Acts 20:23).

5. Prayer in the Spirit

In the book of Acts, the Holy Spirit is not an occasional event, but a permanent, relational, and missional movement that pulsates in the praying heart of the Church. The prayer of the early Christians does not function as a decorative prelude to mission, but as the continuous space where the Spirit acts, descends, fills, empowers, and unifies. After the ascension, the disciples persevere unanimously in prayer (Acts 1:12-14), showing that the Church is born praying together before acting together, waiting not from passivity, but from obedience to Christ's command. This prayerful perseverance becomes the pneumatic threshold of sending.

This pattern reaches its foundational point at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), where the Spirit descends upon a community that prays, waits, and obeys. Here, prayer is not the ultimate goal, but rather the condition that broadens the community's heart, sharpens discernment, and prepares the disciples for missionary action. In Acts, prayer is more than talking to God; it is creating the environment where God speaks and moves.

What is extraordinary in Acts is that the Spirit not only falls at the end of prayer (Acts 4:31), but when they had just finished praying, he bursts in, shaking the place, filling everyone, and activating the proclamation with boldness. But it also falls while the apostles are speaking (Acts 10:44), and even more so when they begin to speak (Acts 11:15), repeating the pattern of the divine principle of Pentecost. This teaches that the Holy Spirit does not depend on the perfection of speech or human control of the moment, but on the community's faithfulness to God's consensus. The Spirit moves before, during, and after, because his direction is not linear, but enveloping and constant.

The text also shows that the Spirit is transmitted by the laying on of hands (Acts 8:17; 19:6), not as a magical act, but as a sign of authority delegated by Jesus and discerned by the apostolic community. This gesture seals a key ecclesiological truth in the Hexagram, because gifts are given by the Spirit, but they are activated and confirmed in the Church, under obedience to Christ. Therefore, no one can usurp, buy, or appropriate that power without conversion or legitimate sending (Acts 8:18). Spiritual direction includes both giving impetus and setting limits on the illegitimate.

Furthermore, the Holy Spirit intervenes in the conciliar consensus of the Church, giving spiritual unity in missional decisions that affect the entire body (Acts 15:28). The formula, "*it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...*" reveals that discernment in Acts is both pneumatic and communal. It is not by human majority, but by the consensus that comes from listening to God together. Missionary unity is the e e fruit of praying

together, discerning together, and deciding together under the guidance of the Spirit, not under the psychology of agreement, but under the theology of shared obedience.

Prayer is the environment of the Spirit's movement (Acts 1:12-14; 2:1-4; 8:15; 4:31). The proclamation of the Gospel is activated by the Spirit before, during, and after apostolic speech (Acts 10:44; 11:15). Gifts are given, discerned, confirmed, and transmitted within the authority of Jesus and the ecclesial community (Acts 8:17; 19:6). Missional unity is conciliar, but not merely human; it is God who grants it (Acts 15:28). Spiritual direction is a bridge, a motor, a limit, and a sending within the missional cycle.

Therefore, prayer is not a private act, but the relational environment where mission is generated and discerned, confirmed and propelled. The Holy Spirit moves in the Church as a guiding voice, an activating fire, a sending force, and a unifying cohesion. And spiritual direction is the accompaniment that ensures fidelity to Jesus' purpose, avoiding both activism without the Spirit and spiritualism without mission.

6. Acts of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is a present and decisive reality in the nature and action of the Christian church (Acts 1:8; 2:4). With the Holy Spirit, the church overcomes obstacles (Acts 7:55), spreads the gospel (Acts 8:39), integrates the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-48; 15:7-11), selects leaders (Acts 13:2; 20:28), and opens up new mission fields (Acts 13:4; 16:6-10). Through prayer, the church discerns the divine will in the Holy Spirit to carry out its mission (Acts 1:23-25) and perceive the vision (Acts 11:5; 22:11). In Acts, the Holy Spirit is the subject and missionary force of the Church

In the Acts of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit is not an auxiliary resource, but the subject who initiates, drives, governs, and expands the mission of the Church. From the beginning, Jesus declares that the missionary identity of the disciple is born "*when the Spirit comes upon you,*" enabling the Church to be a witness with δύναμις, which is effective and public power (Acts 1:8). That promise is fulfilled when believers are filled and begin to speak as the Spirit enables them to express themselves (Acts 2:4; 2:4), revealing that the Christian proclamation

does not arise from human voluntarism, but from the spiritual impetus received in communal encounter with God.

The Spirit is also an inner force of resistance and vision. Stephen, in the midst of martyrdom, contemplates the glory of God: "*But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God*" (Acts 7:55), showing that the Church, with the Spirit, overcomes even the extreme obstacle of persecution, because its mission does not depend on the acceptance of the world, but on the visible presence of Christ at the decisive hour.

In missionary action, the Spirit transports the Church beyond its ethnic, cultural, and religious boundaries. After the baptism of the eunuch, Philip continued to proclaim the saving message in other cities: "*When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and he went on his way rejoicing*" (Acts 8:39). This is a sign that the mission is itinerant, not static, and that the servant of the gospel is moved by the Spirit toward new audiences and territories.

The most striking moment occurs in Cornelius' house, where the Spirit descends upon the Gentiles, without prior human mediation, while Peter proclaims Christ (Acts 10:44-48), allowing the Church to recognize that God does not show partiality; He integrates non-Jews (Acts 15:7-11) and proclaims a new universal ecclesiology. For the sign of Jesus in the world is a multi-ethnic Church, reconciled and united by the same Spirit.

The Spirit chooses and confirms leaders in the Church. In Antioch, "*the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul'*" (Acts 13:2-4), revealing that Christian leadership is the fruit of explicit spiritual discernment, not self-nomination. Later, the elders are warned that the Spirit has appointed them as bishops to shepherd the Lord's Church (Acts 20:28), emphasizing that authority is delegated by God for mission and care, not for domination.

The Spirit also opens and closes missionary routes according to the divine will. He forbids going to Asia and Bithynia (Acts 16:6-7) and, instead, grants the vision of the Macedonian man (Acts 16:9-10), demonstrating that the Church does not decide missionary fields by sociological strategy, but by pneumatological direction. The Spirit is the one who sends, limits, re-directs, and expands.

Prayer is the laboratory of discernment. The apostles pray to choose Judas' successor (Acts 1:23-25), consult the Spirit in council (Acts 15:28), and pray to perceive revelatory visions (Acts 11:5; 22:11). Thus, the Church learns to live together in prayer, to discern by listening, and to move in obedience. In Acts, the Church is missional because it is pneumatic; it proclaims because it is sent; it leads because it is discerned; and it lives together because it prays under the same Spirit that impels it into the world as a living sign of Jesus.



**VI. APOSTOLIC LETTERS
AND REVELATION AS KOINONIA
TO GUIDE THE CHURCH
TO LIVE IN COMMUNITY**

1. The Work of Paul

Paul represents a unique figure in the origins of Christianity. He is an apostle who did not emerge from a priestly caste, but from manual labor, itinerancy, and the revelation of the Spirit. His trade as a tentmaker (Acts 18:1-3) is a missionary statement. From this, we understand that his ministry did not depend on a clerical system or institutional legitimacy, but on a divine calling that was made in everyday life. He worked with his hands and proclaimed Christ as Messiah and Lord with his voice.

The starting point of his mission occurs in Antioch, where he was discerned, set apart, and sent by the Holy Spirit, in the midst of a praying community that fasted, worshiped, and listened to divine guidance (Acts 13:1-4). His sending confirms an ecclesiological principle that he himself would later reproduce. The Christian mission is not apostolic individualism, but communion driven by the Spirit. Paul does not appoint himself as a missionary: he is sent by a spiritual "we" that recognizes the voice of God. His authority does not come from his position, but from his pneumatological sending confirmed in community.

As an itinerant preacher, he lived a ministerial rhythm that alternated between secular work and times dedicated to the verbal proclamation of the Gospel (Acts 18:5). His preaching was not permanent in one place, but mobile, contextual, adaptive, and strategic. From Thessalonica, his message spread with such force that the local church itself became a missionary sender to other regions (1 Thessalonians 1:8-10). This reveals that, for Paul, mission is not only geographical expansion, but multiplication of subjects; the Church is not a passive recipient of doctrine, but an active bearer of the Gospel.

His letters constitute the most influential doctrinal work of the New Testament, not only because of their theological content, but also because of their unifying function. They were not written as abstract treatises, but as instruments of community cohesion, shared identity, and missionary direction. Paul's writings were not private documents, but texts proclaimed publicly to all the brothers (1 Thessalonians 5:27), because the teaching had to be heard, shared, and lived by the whole community. Doctrine, in his view, was not only to be understood, but to be lived.

Letters were exchanged between distant churches (Colossians 4:16), confirming that the first-century Church already experienced an early form of inter-territorial connection: a network of doctrinal, spiritual, and missional communion that recognized itself as one body across multiple territories. The unification of the Church did not depend on a center of power, but on a center of faith: Christ acting in the Spirit among the disciples.

Paul also introduced discipline, but not as an exercise of hierarchical power, but as missionary care for the communion. He instructed the Church to point out those who reject apostolic teaching (2 Thessalonians 3:14), but not for punitive purposes, but for corrective ones: to preserve the relational body that sustains the mission. For Paul, correction protects communion, and communion protects mission. A triple, inseparable movement can be observed: he works in the secular without abandoning the sacred. He proclaims Christ without monopolizing the voice. He writes doctrine to sustain community and mission. Thus, Paul's doctrinal triumph was not to impose a teaching, but to create a Church that lived together from its center, in a sent community that recognizes itself as the family of God in Christ, united not by structure but by spiritual coherence.

His legacy, read from an integral missionary perspective, is summarized in the powerful conviction that the Church does not advance because it receives doctrine, but because doctrine transforms it into a community that is sent forth. Therefore, the sign that transforms the world is not only the message proclaimed, but the communion that embodies and drives it. Paul wrote letters so that the Church would be more organized, more united, and more missionary. His triumph was not administrative, but relational, doctrinal, and pneumatological. It was, in essence, the triumph of a Church in motion, sustained by the Spirit, centered on Christ, and driven by real life.

2. Christian trends

The mission is recognized in communion, doctrine is sustained in incarnation, and the Church corrects itself to live together in Christ. The letters of the New Testament reveal a Christianity that is plural in its emphases but unified in Jesus Christ, whose sign in the world is a Church that lives together discerning, teaches incarnating, and serves in missionary movement.

The Christian community confesses that every gift comes from the Father of lights (James 1:17), which drives active social service to care for the vulnerable, visit the oppressed, and act justly as evidence of the encounter with Christ (James 1:27; 2:14-17). Service is a sign of the divine origin of the Gospel that impacts human life. The letters maintain that Jesus is fully human and that, through him, humanity receives justification and life (Romans 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22). He is the visible image of the invisible God and the fullness of the Godhead (Colossians 1:15; 2:9; Hebrews 1:1-3). Paul teaches the mystery of the dual nature, divine and human, as a paradigm of humility and service (Romans 1:3-4; Philippians 2:5-8). The doctrine

triumphs when the Church coexists from the incarnate Christ, not from doctrinal polarizations or theological hegemonies. The letters describe the Church as a flock shepherded by leaders who serve, not dominate (1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). They warn against the ambition for power (3 John 9-10). Although there is structure, the purpose is not to create a self-sufficient institution, but a community that discerns how to live together in Christ as the only Teacher and Shepherd (1 Peter 2:25; 5:4; 1 Timothy 2:5).

The trend in the New Testament is not "institutional Paulinism," but rather a conciliar Church in communion. The Holy Spirit distributes gifts as He wills (1 Corinthians 12:11; Acts 8:18-20) without exalting emotionalism, but rather service to the body in missionary coexistence (1 Corinthians 12-14). Doctrinal excesses and confusion are corrected (2 Corinthians 11:4; Galatians 1:6-9). Misinterpretations that distort knowledge and fracture fellowship are warned against (2 Peter 3:16; Colossians 2:8; 1 Peter 3:16), as are carnal excesses that destroy the dignity of Christian fellowship (Romans 13:13; 2 Peter 2:18; Ephesians 4:17-19), indecent behavior and addictions to excess (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8), and denial of the resurrection, which would destroy the community (1 Corinthians 15:13-15).

The letters show ascetic tendencies that discerned how to live with one's own body, affections, and vocation, such as relational and sexual abstinence discerned by calling, not by contempt for the body (1 Corinthians 7:1-7). Abstain from drunkenness and debauchery (Ephesians 5:18; 1 Peter 4:3-4). Abstaining for vocational consecration (2 Timothy 2:21-22; 1

Corinthians 7:1-7). Discipline is also koinonic, because who rejects doctrine must be accompanied with communal correction, to return to communion (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15), which shows that correction seeks to restore coexistence, not to exercise institutional punitive power.

The letters of the New Testament show a Christianity that triumphs when it discerns Christ as fully human and divine, proclaims from the communion received in the Spirit, serves from the incarnation of the Messiah, and corrects to restore the missionary coexistence of the body. The sign of Jesus in the world is not institution, but communion. It is not imposition: it is discerned consensus. It is not theory, but coexistence in motion. It is not unbridled charisma, but the gift that builds up the body. It is not a different gospel, but the shared Christ. That is the Pauline, Catholic (universal), and New Testament victory, which is to live together in communion as a living proclamation of the Lamb in the world.

Social service (James 1:17), humanity of Jesus (Romans 5:18-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-33), divinity (Colossians 1:15; 2:9); divine and human (Romans 1:3-4; Philippians 2:5-8). No to Paulinism (1 Corinthians 16:9; Galatians 1:6-9), institutional church (1 Timothy 3:1; 1 Peter 5:1-4), charismatic (1 Corinthians 12:11). Misinterpretation (1 Peter 3:16; Colossians 2:8; Philippians 3:1-3), carnal indulgence (2 Peter 2:18; Ephesians 4:17; Romans 13:13), abstinence (1 Corinthians 7:1), denial of the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:13-15).

3. Pauline domination

In the letters, Paul's doctrinal influence is broad and transversal, but his purpose is not to dominate the Church as an institution of power, but to preserve, protect, and expand the *Koinonia*, that is, the spiritual coexistence that is a sign of Jesus in the world. What might appear to be "Pauline domination" is in reality doctrinal governance for communion, an effort to avoid fractures in the body, integrate peoples, and sustain the universal mission in Christ. It is the divine proposal of the universality of salvation as the foundation of communion.

Ecclesial coexistence is based on the inclusion of all peoples in God's plan of salvation. Paul proclaims Israel's missionary longing for salvation (Romans 10:1) and then explains that the fall of some opened the door to the salvation of others, bringing about a divine plan of universal salvation that unites Jews and Gentiles in the same movement of God (Romans 11:11). The salvation of the Gentiles is not the end of the plan for Israel, but part of God's purpose. The entry of the Gentiles sustains and prepares for the future restoration of Israel. Salvation functions as a bridge of reconciliation within the messianic body. Paul

maintains that the Gospel was planned by God as a prior promise to include the nations (Gentiles) and not as a late addition (Romans 1:16-17; Galatians 3:8).

Paul's position affirms that in Christ there is no exclusive division between Jews and Gentiles, because both are incorporated into the same messianic body through faith and the Spirit (Romans 3:29-30; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:28). He teaches that this salvation fulfills the promise to Abraham, who would be the father of many nations, not just one (Romans 4:11-12, 16-18). He presents Gentile salvation as a missionary mechanism with a future purpose for Israel, not as a replacement, but as a bridge that prepares for restoration and reconciliation (Romans 11:11-15).

Messianic fellowship is so that no people are excluded, no church is self-sufficient, and all doctrine leads to living together under one Lord. The letters contain stern warnings, intended to uphold unity, against misinterpretations that fracture fellowship (1 Peter 3:16; Colossians 2:8) and against strange doctrines that break the body (1 Timothy 4:1), such as vain words that divide (2 Timothy 2:14-16). Reject carnal indulgence that destroys the community's witness (Jude 4-7; 2 Peter 2:2-3; Romans 13:13) and correct those who divide fellowship (Titus 3:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:20; 1 Corinthians 5:2).

The purpose of these corrections is to preserve the unity of the body, restore fellowship in Christ, and protect the sign of Jesus in the world (). Although Paul acknowledges the existence of leaders (1 Timothy 3:1; 3:1; 1 Peter 5:1-4), the dominant

pattern for these leaders is to shepherd by serving, not dominating; to protect the flock, not control it; to unify doctrine in order to preserve fellowship, not impose institutionalism. Structure exists for fellowship; fellowship does not exist for structure. The doctrinal influence in the letters is not a theological empire, but a doctrinal convergence in the service of missional fellowship. Universal salvation, shared grace, delegated faith, discerned prayer, convened assembly, organized scripture, servant leadership, doctrinal correction, and shared witness exist for one purpose: *that the Church may live together as one body in Christ, thus being the sign of Jesus in the world.* In his letters, Paul does not dominate the Church, but serves its *Koinonia*. His triumph is not doctrinarism, but communion in motion.

Universal salvation (Romans 10:1; Romans 11:11). Approach to salvation: grace (Ephesians 2:8-10), sin (Romans 6:17) God (2 Corinthians 1:3-4), Christ (1 John 4:10), faith (2 Timothy 1:13), scripture (Titus 1:9), prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17-21), gathering together (Hebrews 10:25), fellowship (2 Timothy 2:2), witness (1 Corinthians 15:14-15). Sound conduct (Jude; 2 Peter 2:2-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-6). Sound doctrine (1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 2:16). Sound scripture (2 Timothy 2:14-16; Titus 1:10-14) Sound community (Titus 3:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:20; 1 Corinthians 5:2).

4. Law or no law

Paul embodies a triple identity: Jewish by birth, Greek by language, and Roman by citizenship (Philippians 3:5-6; Acts 21:37; 22:28). This combination makes him a living bridge, not a promoter of exclusionary systems. His great doctrinal work consists in discerning how to live together as a single messianic body, without dividing the Church between rival identities, but rather reconciling them in missional communion, that is, in Christ-centered *koinonia*.

Paul affirms that salvation does not come from human control of the law, but from God's sovereign act of calling us to communion by grace (Galatians 3:20; 3:20). However, this position is not a break with Jewish identity, for Paul himself confirms that he remains a Jew, heir to the promises and part of the people of God (Romans 3:1-4; 11:1; 1 Corinthians 7:18-19). The tension between Law and non-Law in Paul is not an abandonment of Judaism, but rather Christological discernment for the coexistence of peoples in *koinonia*.

At the Council of Jerusalem, Paul argues that Gentiles should not bear the burden of the works of the Mosaic law (Acts 15:1-31). He does not do this to create a "lawless Church,"

but to protect the coexistence of the messianic body, preventing Jewish identity from becoming a barrier to communion. What Paul promotes is a *koinonia* freed from divisive burdens, but obedient to the universal laws of God given to Noah, valid for all peoples, such as abstaining from idolatry, blood, strangled animals, and fornication (Acts 15). Liberation from the law is an act of *koinonia*, that is, of universal communion, which removes what divides in order to preserve what unites.

The gospel is a relational movement that seeks to win others over to live together as brothers and sisters. Paul declares his missionary method: "*I have become a servant to all, to win more*" (1 Corinthians 9:19-24). He adapts relationally, lives with everyone without renouncing Christ, and uses the pedagogy of work, culture, and mission to include rather than exclude (1 Corinthians 18:1-3) as the biographical backdrop of the working world. His impetus is not to abolish, but to win people over to the communion of the gospel, where doctrine is a proclamation for good coexistence.

Paul hopes for a future moment when Israel will be restored, and the Gentiles fully incorporated into the people of God (Romans 11:25-27). That hope is not ethnocentric, but *koinonic* and eschatological, in which God will unite all peoples under the Messiah to live with Him and with each other. The ultimate goal is not the law, nor the abolition of the law, but universal *koinonia* under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

We are all one in Christ, in communion as a messianic sign to the world. The letters proclaim the core of Christian

coexistence (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11). This is not a uniform cultural identity, but spiritual coherence among peoples who discern living together under the same Lord.

Paul's debate of "Law or no Law" is an act of discernment for communion. He does not reject Jewish identity, but rather rejects its absolutization. He does not eliminate the law, but rather eliminates the works of the law as a barrier. He does not propose doctrinal autonomy, but relational coherence. His work is not antinomianism or sectarian Paulinism, but messianic koinonia. Paul teaches, so that the Church may live together; he liberates so that the Church may include; he corrects so that the Church may not fracture; and he proclaims so that the world may see the sign of Jesus, in one reconciled body, where Christ is all and is in all.

Paul, the Jew (Philippians 3:5-6), the Greek (Acts 21:37), and the Roman (Acts 22:28). He turned away from the works of the law (Galatians 3:20) but remained Jewish (Romans 3:1-4; 11:1; 1 Corinthians 7:18-19). Hoping for the restoration and incorporation of the Gentiles (Romans 11:25-27; Galatians 1:15-17), he freed the Gentiles from the burdens of the works of the law and commended them to follow the universal laws of God given to Noah (Acts 15:1-31), winning them to the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:19-24). All are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11).

5. The Church

The Church, in the New Testament letters and the book of Revelation, is a Jewish-Gentile community that discerns how to live together, resists persecution, and triumphs in the glory of the Lamb. In the New Testament Letters, the Church is a community formed by Jews and Gentiles, united by the messianic confession centered on Christ (Acts 13:14-16; Romans 1:3-7; Galatians 2:7). Paul does not describe two churches, but a single body living together in Christ, where the proclamation of the gospel is entrusted according to the audience, but communion is universal.

The Church is warned about divine wrath, which comes against sin and human self-sufficiency (Romans 2:5-6; 3:5-6), and is therefore exhorted to flee from judgment through obedience to Christ and living in the truth of the Kingdom (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31). This "escaping wrath" is not spiritual cowardice, but eschatological discernment to preserve the community in mission.

Paul also recounts internal tensions, where false brothers induce and spy on the freedom of the gospel (Galatians 2:4;

2:4). However, these crises do not nullify the nature of the Church, but rather purify it doctrinally and relationally to protect its missional koinonia. The letters do not hide the fact that the Church is persecuted (1 Thessalonians 2:13-16) and that its Jewish roots carry the historical weight of the promises (Romans 9:1-5). Persecution does not destroy the Church; persecution confirms its ecclesial identity as a messianic body that is not earthly, but spiritual and hopeful.

Pauline ecclesiology presents the Church as the body of Christ, where coexistence is not sociological, but organic and spiritual coherence: "*if one member suffers, all suffer*" (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). Furthermore, it is a body justified by faith and reconciled by grace (Romans 5:1). Although there is recognition of leaders (Galatians 2:9-12), their authority is functional and missionary, not absolutist. The pillars support communion, they do not replace it.

This Church that lives together under Christ is also the Church that awaits the parousia, παρουσία: the second coming of Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2), lives in marital hope with Christ as her Spouse (Ephesians 5:22-23), but not from earthly categories of human hierarchy, but as a messianic bond of love and communion.

The ecclesiological and koinonic principles of Revelation teach that the Church is not the owner of the Kingdom, but is invited to Christ by Christ himself: "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me*" (Revelation 3:20). It

does not decide without listening, but discerns by obeying the Spirit: *"hear what the Spirit says..."* (Revelation 2-3). It is not earthly in its identity, but spiritual in its destiny (Revelation 21-22; 1 Corinthians 15:50). It is not cultural uniformity, but multi-ethnic coexistence in Christ (Revelation 7:9-10). It is not institutional hierarchy, but delegated royalty from the Lamb (Revelation 1:5-6; 5:9-10). It is not defeat through persecution, but victory through consistency in Christ (Revelation 12:11; 19:7-9; 22:5). Paul's letters consolidate the doctrine to sustain the messianic coexistence of the body; Revelation confirms it to sustain the perseverance of the body.

The Church is not described as an earthly institution that dominates, but as a spiritual community that discerns living together under Christ, listens to the Spirit, resists the wrath of sin, endures persecution without losing its identity, recognizes itself as one body of Jews and Gentiles, and finally triumphs in the glory of the Lamb, reigning with Him in eternal consistency. The sign of Jesus in the world is not an institutional structure, but a Church that lives together, discerns, resists, obeys, and triumphs under the rule of the Lamb. That is the eschatological victory of Christian koinonia.

The Church is made up of Jews and Gentiles (Acts 13:14-16; Romans 1:3-7; Galatians 2:7), fleeing from divine wrath (Romans 2:5; 3:5-6), being led astray (Galatians 2:4) and persecuted (1 Thessalonians 2:13-16; Romans 9:1-5). Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-27), justified (Romans 5:1), parousia (2 Thessalonians 2:1-2), matrimonial figure (Ephesians 5:22-23), hierarchical (Galatians 2:9-12), immediate end (1 Thessalonians 4:16;

1 Corinthians 7:29) to the kingdom and glory (1 Thessalonians 2:12), spiritual, not earthly (1 Corinthians 15:50) and victorious (1 Corinthians 15:55).

6. Pauline originality

In the letters and the book of Revelation, Paul appears as an original, foundational, and relational voice, whose most distinctive contribution is not the creation of an autonomous doctrinal system, but rather the impact of the encounter with Jesus that reorganizes the coexistence of the messianic body. Paul is not a theologian of communion, called to unite peoples, redefine the law, and produce spiritual coherence in Christ.

The origin of Pauline doctrine is divine encounter, not human imitation. Paul claims to have received the gospel through direct revelation from Jesus Christ, not from human tradition (Galatians 1:12; 1:12). His teaching arises from his encounter with the Risen One, which influences his mission and impels him to integrate others into that same communion, not to replace it. *Koinonia* in Paul is both Christological and pneumatic, which are two coexisting pillars (Galatians 2:20). The idea is to live "*in the Spirit*," for "*if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him*" (Romans 8:9). In Paul, Christ and the Spirit do not compete; they coexist as the foundation of the communion of the body. Jews and Gentiles share the same

condition and hope: all have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Forgiveness and salvation are received by believing in Christ (Romans 3:25). Salvation is universal because communion is also universal, since all enter through shared faith in Christ.

The law is not abolished, but discerned for universal coexistence. Paul declares that those who sin without the law will perish without the law, and those who sin under the law will be judged by the law (Romans 2:12-16). In doing so, he shows that the law remains an ethical criterion, but not a barrier to communion. The law is not renounced, but its divisive use is renounced. Paul embodies and teaches the coexistence of two complementary circumcisions: Physical circumcision, also practiced by Paul out of missionary discernment, not doctrinal imposition (Acts 16:3; 1 Corinthians 7:18-19). Circumcision of the heart, which allows Jews and Gentiles to live together spiritually without absorbing their identity (Romans 2:29; Colossians 2:11-12). Paul's originality consists in showing that Judaism and Gentility are not rival blocs, but identities called to live together under Christ, through the transformation of the heart. Paul teaches that the promise to Abraham extends to the uncircumcised who believe, and also to the circumcised who believe, so that Abraham may be the father of all believers (Romans 4:9-12, 18-21). Paul's doctrinal victory is to bring everyone together as the reconciled offspring of the Messiah in the faith of Abraham.

The Apocalypse culminates what Paul began to teach: a people from every tribe, language, and nation, united under

the Lamb (Revelation 7:9-10). Christ as Prince of kings who makes the Church a priestly royalty (Revelation 1:5-6). The wedding of the Lamb is a messianic, not institutional, marriage figure (Revelation 19:7-9). God dwelling with humanity in eternal coexistence (Revelation 21:3-4). The koinonia of Revelation confirms the Pauline principle: *all are one in Christ under the Lamb, in universal and victorious coexistence.*

Paul's originality is not to create a parallel doctrine, but to produce communion parallel to mission: a koinonia that is born of the encounter with Jesus and lives in the Spirit, incorporates identities without nullifying them, re-signifies the law to unite and not to exclude, and unites peoples so that all may live together as a messianic family and heirs of the Abrahamic promise, until that communion triumphs in the glory of the Lamb. Paul does not standardize the Church, he reconciles it. He does not dominate, he integrates. He does not replace the law, he discerns it in order to live together. He does not absorb identities, he incorporates them. His victory is not "Paulinianism," but the messianic communion that makes Jesus visible in the world and in history.

Called by Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:12). Living in the Spirit (Romans 8:9; Galatians 2:20). Jews and Gentiles receive forgiveness (Romans 3:23) and are saved by believing in Jesus Christ (Romans 3:25), without renouncing the law (Romans 2:12-16) of physical circumcision (Acts 16:3; 1 Corinthians 7:18-19) and circumcision of the heart for Gentiles (Colossians 2:11-12; Romans 2:29). The idea is to Judaize the Gentiles (1

Corinthians 7:19) and gentelize the Jews (Romans 3:30), so that the Abrahamic promise may be fulfilled (Romans 4:9-12, 18-21).

Conclusions

The mission of the Church is formative rather than programmatic.

Jesus' command: "*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. Amen*" (Matthew 28:19–20), reveals that mission does not begin with action, but with proclamation (*kerigma*), teaching (*didaskalia*), and preaching that impels obedience (*kerysso*). A people cannot be sent to transform what they have not first understood and embraced.

The gifts of the Spirit (*karisma*) are not a complement to ministry, but its activation. In the Wesleyan vision, the movement of the Spirit not only inspires faith, but equips, directs, and enables the Church to fulfill the *Missio Dei*. Gifts do not exist for ecclesial self-promotion, but for missional service and the edification of the body of Christ.

Service (*diakonia*) is the embodied credibility of the Gospel in the community surrounding the community of faith. There is no authentic mission without visible action. Mark presents service as a concrete, close, and practical ministry. The Church not only proclaims the Kingdom: it makes it tangible in the relief of suffering, social justice, and active compassion, turning the message into a bridge between faith and community.

Communion (*koinonia*) is the ecosystem where mission is sustained in a concrete place and in real time, in a community enlivened by the Spirit. The letters of the New Testament and Revelation show that unity is not uniformity, but spiritual coherence. Mission endures when the Church is a reconciled community, organized from love, mutual care, and collaboration, not from competition.

Discernment is an act of faithfulness, not control. Measuring missionary life does not contradict faith. The Church is called to examine itself (2 Corinthians 13:5), care for its teaching (1 Timothy 4:16), recognize its fruit (Matthew 7:17), and review its missionary faithfulness (Revelation 2-3). Therefore, evaluation is not bureaucratizing the Holy Spirit, but obeying the biblical pattern that Christ gave to his Church for the performance of mission.

The Missional Hexagram reveals that the fruit of mission is the Church itself in motion. The six dimensions are not isolated phases, but converging forces that produce a seventh reality: the Church sent, renewed, and continually reformed by Christ.

It is not mission that is born of the Church; it is the Church that is born of God who sends.

Integral mission produces integral disciples. The insistence, resistance, and persistence of those who respond to the mission call demonstrate that effectiveness is not a secular value alien to faith, but the natural result of a people who live out mission with purpose, character, and hope.

Pauline originality confirms that mission is the reconciling inclusion of all humanity and not of an exclusive people. The salvation of the Gentiles and the future restoration of Israel show that mission is also a bridge of coexistence in the messianic body, where faith unites without annulling, and forgiveness reconciles without demanding cultural assimilation.

Mission transcends the temple and unfolds in the language of the world in concrete places and measurable times. A digital medium, when born of missionary criteria, does not replace the Church, since the tangible church extends its voice, multiplies its reach, and democratizes access to biblical formation, calling new generations hungry for meaning, transformation, and purpose.

Closing the cycle is honoring the sending. The mission will always be ongoing, but its understanding must be complete. Integrating the six dimensions into a single framework is to affirm that the Church is proclaimed, taught, empowered, serving, united, and sent, until Christ is all in all (plērōma, πληρόω).

Instrumental Operability

1. Nature of the Instrument

The Missional Hexagram is a **ministerial diagnostic instrument** that operationalizes six essential dimensions of Christian mission—*Kerygma*, *Didaskalia*, *Kerysso*, *Charisma*, *Diakonia*, and *Koinonia*—allowing for the measurement of trends, strengths, weaknesses, and patterns of emphasis in faith communities.

2. Variables analyzed

Each dimension is defined as an **independent variable** within the evaluation framework:

1. *Kerygma*: proclamation of the gospel outside the community
2. *Didaskalia*: doctrinal and pedagogical formation of believers
3. *Kerysso*: public proclamation with spiritual authority
4. *Charisma*: exercise and development of spiritual gifts
5. *Diakonia*: social action and service to others
6. *Koinonia*: community life and relational bonds

Each variable is observed through specific and measurable indicators.

3. Observable indicators (example)

Here is a representative sample of the variables, which can also be expanded:

- 1. Kerygma: invitation to new listeners, testimonies, evangelistic language*
- 2. Didaskalia: educational structure, doctrinal clarity, progressive discipleship*
- 3. Kerysso: communicative clarity, spiritual anointing, contextual relevance*
- 4. Karisma: identification of gifts, ministerial participation, functional diversity*
- 5. Diaconia: concrete help, social impact, community collaboration*
- 6. Koinonia: relational trust, conflict resolution, sense of belonging*

4. Measurement scale

Each indicator is rated on a Likert scale from 1 to 5:

- 1 – *Very weak*
- 2 – *Weak*
- 3 – *Functional*
- 4 – *Strong*
- 5 – *Very strong*

This allows **perceptions and practices to be quantified** in a statistical and comparable way.

5. Interpretation of results

When a dimension has low ratings: "*Where these responses reveal weakness, that dimension needs to be renewed.*" When a dimension shows strength: "*Where they show strength, the church is functioning gracefully in that expression of mission.*"

The analysis should consider:

- *perception biases*
- *generational differences*
- *sociocultural context*
- *congregational history*

6. Expected outcome

The final result is a **missional profile** of the church, expressed visually as:

- *hexafactor graph*
- *missional radar chart*
- *percentage distribution by dimension*

This allows for the construction of a **strategic mission plan** based on real data rather than intuition or subjective impressions.

7. Technical conclusion

The Missionary Hexagram is a qualitative-quantitative assessment tool, valid in multiple ecclesial contexts, whose purpose is to guide pastoral decision-making, strengthen neglected areas, and consolidate the integral mission entrusted by Christ to his Church.

The mission comes from God who sends (*Missio Dei*), not from human initiatives.

The Church is not the origin of the mission, but its result: it is formed and sent by Christ and guided by the Spirit.

The Gospel forms before sending.

Kerygma, Didaskalia, and Kerysso reveal that proclamation, teaching, and preaching are foundations that educate the faith and generate missionary obedience.

The Spirit equips the mission.

Karisma is the activation of the gifts of the Spirit to build up and mobilize the Church toward service to the Kingdom, not toward institutional protagonism.

Service embodies the proclaimed truth.

Diakonia is the practical credibility of the Gospel: justice, compassion, and concrete action that connect faith with social transformation.

Communion sustains the sending.

Koinonia is not only fellowship, but spiritual unity organized from love, mutual care, and collaboration of the body of Christ.

Discerning and evaluating mission is an act of faithfulness.

Spiritual measurement is not control, but examining fruit, teaching, and obedience to Christ, identifying what He desires to renew in His Church.

Questionnaire - evaluation of the missional hexagram

Instructions:

Please mark with an X or circle the option you consider correct for each statement: 1 = Very weak | 2 = Weak | 3 = Functional | 4 = Strong | 5 = Very strong

A. KERIGMA – Proclamation of the Gospel

1. Frequency of proclaiming the gospel to new people

1 2 3 4 5

2. Clarity of the evangelistic message

1 2 3 4 5

3. Intentional invitation to new listeners/visitors

1 2 3 4 5

4. Public and personal testimonies of faith

1 2 3 4 5

B. DIDASKALIA – Teaching and training

1. Structure of biblical teaching

1 2 3 4 5

2. Doctrinal clarity and biblical fidelity

1 2 3 4 5

3. Progressive discipleship (learner → servant → leader)

1 2 3 4 5

4. Continuous evaluation of learning in the community

1 2 3 4 5

C. KERYSSO – Preaching

1. Clarity and structure of preaching

1 2 3 4 5

2. Contextual relevance of the message

1 2 3 4 5

3. Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit

1 2 3 4 5

4. Practical application for daily life

1 2 3 4 5

D. CHARISMA – Gifts and Ministries

1. Identification and recognition of gifts

1 2 3 4 5

2. Opportunities to exercise gifts

1 2 3 4 5

3. Diversity of ministries in the church

1 2 3 4 5

4. Ministerial training and mentoring

1 2 3 4 5

E. DIACONIA – Service and social action

1. Sensitivity to the needs of others

1 2 3 4 5

2. Concrete and sustained aid projects

1 2 3 4 5

3. Visible social impact on the community

1 2 3 4 5

4. Active participation of the congregation in service

1 2 3 4 5

F. KOINONIA – Community and relationships

1. Level of relational trust

1 2 3 4 5

2. Conflict resolution

1 2 3 4 5

3. Integration of new members

1 2 3 4 5

4. Sense of belonging and family in the church

1 2 3 4 5

OPEN COMMENTS (optional)

In what area do you feel the church needs to grow?

.....
.....

What strengths would you highlight about the church?

.....
.....

DATA (optional and anonymous)

Age: ____ Time in the church: ____ years

Do you have an active ministry?

Yes No

MISSIONAL HEXAGRAM



Mission is not a destination that is reached, but a horizon that reaches us.

When the Church listens to Christ, learns from Scripture, serves from the Spirit, and walks in communion, it discovers its purest form: to be a people always sent, always renewed, always moving toward God.

The Six-Dimensional Mission Hexagram is not intended to replace existing denominational plans. Rather, it offers a theological and formative framework to help churches and leaders understand, evaluate, and live out in a comprehensive way the missional emphases that the Church has already discerned for its ministry in the place where Christ has sent it.