



# KINGDOM CULTURE 1

## The Greenhouse Effect

Different places, clubs, offices, churches have their own CULTURES.

\* Sometimes the differences are OBVIOUS; sometimes rather SUBTLER.

→ *Can you think of an organisation anywhere with a different, unique, stand-out culture? How would you categorise their points of difference?*

**CULTURE DEFINED** = A set of observable patterns, beliefs, behaviours, disciplines, terms & expectations that characterise & permeate a group of people, by which they are known & recognised. It influences the way people think about, speak to, act towards & see the world around them. It is powerful & pervasive, determining vision, values & priorities, and becoming purpose & identity. It defines what is normal.

→ *What does the Barn culture look or feel like to you? What do you sense as you walk in the door? What are the characteristics that make it different to other churches you've attended?*

→ *Can you describe the culture of another church you've attended and what stood out (for good or otherwise!)*

→ *How does an organisation form its culture? Is it possible to change your culture? Can culture happen by accident?*

**FARMING METAPHOR:** The Parable of the Sower (Mark 4)

\* If you want that hundredfold HARVEST; make sure you plant your seed in the RIGHT SOIL.

\* We often have ROCKY or THORNY soil and think we can just plant our seed and get the DREAMY RESULTS we IMAGINE ... But it just doesn't work like that.

→ *To what extent do you believe that we think like that as churches? What rocks or thorns might stand in the way of what the Lord wants to do amongst us?*

\* You have to WORK the soil so it's FERTILE for HARVEST.

→ *How do you work a culture? How do you cultivate, plough, fertilise & water the soil?*

→ *How fertile is our soil for harvest? Any fertiliser required? Weeds to be plucked? Is it time to water: what and how?*

### GREENHOUSE METAPHOR

\* Some of the things we'd like to grow will only do so in CERTAIN ENVIRONMENTS.

\* Conversely, some things we DON'T want to grow will start to spring up if we don't set the RIGHT ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS.

→ *If you're a gardener, please explain to everyone else the variable conditions you can create and adapt in a greenhouse and what differences those changes can make.*

If our church is like a greenhouse, to an extent at least, we can set the ATMOSPHERE, control the ENVIRONMENT and WORK the culture.

\* Contrast the RELIGIOUS JEWS with Jesus' KINGDOM CULTURE.

→ *What were the stark cultural differences there, and how were the results different?*

\* What caused the EXTRAORDINARY IMPACT of the Acts church?

→ *What caused that explosive growth, the miracles & numerous conversions?*

\* Would church CHANGE if we FULLY EMBRACED Jesus' Kingdom Culture as evidence in the Book of Acts?

→ *Would it change? What would it mean to fully embrace?*

### CATEGORIES OF CHURCH CULTURE

1. DIFFERENT STYLES

2. LOST the PLOT

3. INSIDIOUS UNWELCOME GUESTS

\* Part of CRAFTING the culture you want, is the CHASING OUT of OPPOSING cultures.

→ *Discuss the different cultures you've experienced or observed in the church world. Which ones appeal to you? What would you like to avoid? What are the insidious unwelcome guests that sneak in if we're not careful?*

→ *How do you 'guard the gate?' What would you 'chase out of church culture with a stick?'*

4. KINGDOM CULTURE

\* What did Jesus SAY, DO, TEACH & MODEL?

\* What was His attitude to CHARISMA, SUPERNATURAL, THE MIRACULOUS?

\* How did He do MINISTRY & RELATIONSHIP?

→ *What would extreme Kingdom culture look like? If Jesus was leading your church, what might change? What elements of the various things Jesus talked about and emphasised would you like to see in our culture? Are they?*

### THE DREAM

WHAT IF God really HAD HIS WAY?

WHAT IF we were PUTTY IN HIS HANDS, rather than trying to make it the other way around?

WHAT IF God were really on the THRONE, the HOLY SPIRIT liberated and the power of the GOSPEL let loose?

→ *What's your dream? What could it be like? What would we have to add to or take away from our culture to achieve that dream?*