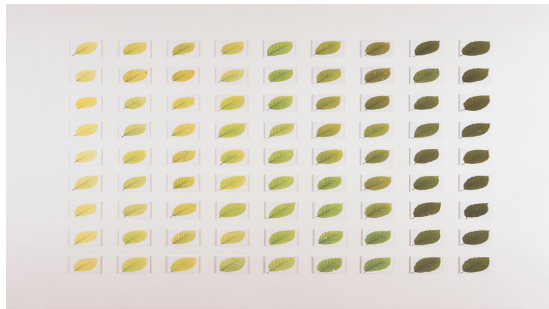




WEAVING SOCIAL JUSTICE

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Blending the Compassionate Works and Words of the Gospel in Your Local Context

Shortly after the Campus Ministry responded to the South Asian tsunami and Hurricane Katrina, Cru leadership decided to become more intentional about “weaving the compassionate works and words of the gospel into the USCM.” Since that time, many Cru staff and students have blended good news and good deeds (or evangelism and social justice) together in various ways in their local context. But it’s not always easy. Can you relate to these comments by Cru staff members?

“I think that justification and justice are joined at the hip and yet... in Christianity today, it seems like you are either passionate about evangelism or doing justice. I desire to be a part of both... I honestly get confused on how to build movements that incorporate both.”

“As a Cru student and now as a staff member, I have often felt stifled in my concern for justice, specifically caring for widows, orphans, immigrants, and the poor. There is a tension between my heart for justice and my heart for our mission and vision of winning, building, and

sending college students.”

“I think our justice components should compliment our calling to students and faculty. Sometimes that’s difficult because we tend to work with the most privileged.”

These comments were written by Cru staff members wrestling with the challenge of holding things crucial to Biblical Christianity in proper tension in our own lives and in local expressions of Cru. The tensions fall into several main categories:

- Evangelism/discipleship vs social justice (or, more simply, justification and justice)
- Personal salvation/individual growth vs transforming society and culture
- Reaching leaders and influencers vs caring for the widow, orphan, poor, and oppressed
- Organizational call vs personal passions for “the least of these” (along with a passion for students)

How do we keep these things (that seem to conflict or compete with one another) in proper tension?

In many areas, holding things in proper tension is inherent in the way God made the world and crucial for following Christ. To understand Scripture and live the Christian life, we must wrestle, for example, with God’s sovereignty and human responsibility, God’s love and evil and suffering in the world, our own growth and the needs of others, etc. It’s a challenge to hold things in tension, but there’s 40,000 pounds of tension in a properly tuned piano—and it’s the tension that allows a well-trained pianist to produce beautiful music. So it is in life and ministry. If we learn to hold



justice and justification, reaching leaders and the poor, organizational call and personal passion, and a host of other things in proper tension, we can produce beautiful music in the Kingdom of Christ.

Following are some practical ways to plant and cultivate integral movements—movements that intentionally blend passionate proclamation and compassionate demonstration of the gospel—in your local context. We'll give you some brief thoughts under the following categories along with links to where you can find more. The categories:

- Sharpen Our Theology for Blending the Works
- Clarify Our Vision for Integral Movements
- Fan the Flame of Passion for Justification and Justice
- Train and Equip for Blending the Works and Words of the Gospel
- Develop Strategies and Methods

SHARPEN OUR THEOLOGY

When it comes to blending passionate proclamation and compassionate demonstration of the gospel, there are a series of battles to face. For starters, Satan will oppose you because he hates bold and clear proclamation of gospel truth, and he hates sacrificial service and justice initiatives that free those under his hate-filled schemes of oppression. There's also "compassion fatigue" that can set in when we wade into the complexities of helping those in the quartet of the vulnerable—the widow, the orphan, the alien, and the poor. And, of course, we often want to run from the hard work of learning to hold apparent competing ideas in proper tension. Whatever the challenges of blending the works and words of the gospel, the Spirit of God uses a clear Biblical understanding of the issues and deep convictions shaped by God's Word to keep us moving forward. **Appendix 1** contains several key passages of Scripture, articles, messages, books, and Bible studies for you to choose from as you develop your own understanding, convictions, and ministry philosophy.

You will find that the Scriptures teach us to proclaim the greatness of God—the excellencies of His character, His saving power for all peoples—and to rejoice in our firm hope that He will redeem the

human race and restore everything in all creation that was lost in the Fall. The Scriptures also teach us that God is filled with compassion, is Himself "the father of the fatherless," and holds his people to a unique accountability to care for the widow, orphan, alien, and poor. And when Jesus breaks into human history with incomprehensible grace and mercy, he redeems a people and so captivates their hearts that they have to speak of His great love. And they're so overwhelmed with His mercy that they want to extend mercy to those most in need.

CLARIFY OUR VISION

Growing numbers of Cru MTLs are finding ways to cast vision for integral movements and help staff and students see how everything fits together. For example, Ryan Berg (Cincinnati Metro MTL) and his team invite students to join in God's story through "The E3 Challenge." E3 is true to Cru's rich history, vision, and mission and to the Biblical mandates about our broader Christian responsibility to care for the widow, orphan, poor, and oppressed. Built around three E's, Ryan and his team invite faculty, students, and volunteers to:

Embrace the Gospel Personally: An honest recognition of personal sin and a genuine celebration of Christ's grace to us in the midst of it. We never move beyond the Gospel, only into a more profound understanding of it.

Experience the Gospel Together: Seeking to engage in authentic community without masks by moving forward together.

Extend the Gospel to Others: (the three ways of extending are distinguishable but inseparable):

Displaying it by being who God has called us to be—people of Christ-like character.

Demonstrating it by doing what God has called us to do—entering into the needs of others: physically, emotionally, relationally, etc.

Declaring it by saying what God has called us to say—sharing the good news of Christ's cross and empty tomb and the wonderful implications of both.



For more details about E3, read [Joining In God's Story \(crupressgreen.com/joining-in-gods-story\)](http://crupressgreen.com/joining-in-gods-story)

As you clarify your own vision, thinking in terms of partnering with the university to relieve suffering in the world will expand vision, launch new movements, and increase impact. For example:

- The Cru movement at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo created a service project for the entire university
- Appalachian State Cru created a way for the entire campus to respond to the Japan tsunami
- The Denver Metro team has found a way to tap into some of the potential of a Jesuit university to help relieve suffering in Calcutta, India. (All three stories are below.)

Regardless of how you conceptualize your local movement, summer project, or whatever you're leading—or what kind of language you use—integral movements start with integrated thinking and vision. Think in terms of blending good news and good deeds, passionate proclamation and compassionate demonstration of the gospel, evangelism and social justice. Develop a vision for your movements where win, build, send efforts change lives in your context and connect with the brokenness on campus and in the broader world. Then make plans and cast vision for students and faculty to let the gospel do its work of changing their hearts and setting things right in a broken world. You'll find resources for clarifying your vision in **Appendix 2**.

FAN THE FLAME OF PASSION FOR JUSTIFICATION AND JUSTICE

We all want to launch movements of compassionate evangelists, be good neighbors with a great message, and infect the whole world with the hope that only Jesus can give. A big vision to see everyone and everything brought under the loving reign of Jesus—and blending your God-given passions with Cru's mission—are crucial to keep personal passion aflame for a lifetime. This section includes a few stories where Cru teams have successfully blended their passion for the widow, orphan, poor, and oppressed with their passion for reaching and discipling college students and professors.

The **San Francisco Metro** team partnered with the Christian Alliance for Orphans to create an Orphan

Scholarship Fund (OSF), in order to raise funds to send three Honduran orphans to college. One objective of the OSF was to develop relationships with those student populations the movement did not currently have a connection with. As word got out on campus about the OSF, the president of the Queer Alliance approached our staff with a desire to help raise the necessary funds. Through the care exhibited by Cru for the marginalized, members of the gay community felt safe to express their desire to follow God. One member of the Queer Alliance directly told a staff member "I'm desperately seeking God," while the QA president later confessed his interest in the OSF was driven by a desire to see what faith in Jesus could look like for him. Through the relationship with the QA, one student came to faith in Jesus and another is highly involved in Cru's activities. Also, the combined efforts raised more than enough money for the three Honduran orphans to go to college, and they saw a Honduran-born student who was nominally involved in Cru gain a heart for reaching Latinos and launch a Destino movement in San Francisco.

Colorado State University hosted its second "Justice Week" during the spring of 2012. Students did a variety of things to raise awareness of slavery, trafficking, and other forms of oppression around the world. Because issues like human trafficking tend to push superficial matters from the minds of students and make room for serious conversations about the realities of life, CSU students were very open to spiritual conversations. Danny, a Muslim student from Dubai, entered into a great spiritual conversation with one of our staff about how he cared about ending oppression. His faith aside, Danny desired to align himself to what we were caring about. Also several Cru student-leaders used Soularium™ cards with a set of "justice questions" to share Christ with hundreds of CSU students, which helped give our students new opportunities to initiate conversations. The event also helped solidify CSU Cru's partnership with *International Justice Mission* on campus by giving Cru an opportunity to link hand-in-hand with IJM student leaders, and not minimize their efforts or spiritual calling. (Watch a 3-minute Justice Week recap video.)

The Cru team at **Cal Poly San Luis Obispo** partnered with *Feed My Starving Children* to create a service opportunity for the entire campus. The primary purpose was to share the experience of sacrificial living with Greek students and give them a philanthropy opportunity. The vision was to pack



thousands of meals for hungry children and cultivate a greater connection to the Greek system. Over the two day event, 1558 volunteers packed 200,232 meals that will help feed 550 children for a year. In addition, the event opened doors of cooperation between Cru and Cal Poly Greek Life. Greek Life leaders actually asked Cru staff to lead Bible studies in the fraternities and sororities and to plan more events together for the future. MTL Jamey Pappas met with the Student Community Services director afterwards, who indicated he would like to partner in the future as well. According to Jamie, the event also “really changed the perception of Cru at Cal Poly which, for some, was negative and uninformed.” (Watch 2-minute event recap video.)

The **Cincinnati Metro** ministry partners with India Cru to launch new movements on university campuses in Mumbai. Cinci Metro also partners with *The Aruna Project*, a small ministry caring for women and children who have been freed from prostitution and trafficking. Every year, Cinci Metro hosts an “Aruna 5K” race to raise money for the Aruna project. Emails from Ryan Berg, MTL in Cincinnati, demonstrate that Ryan and his wife have found a way to simultaneously live out their passion for trafficking victims and accelerate the ministry in Cincinnati.

After the first Aruna 5K in April 2009: “We were able to engage certain groups on campus that we would never have been able to before. We had atheist graduate students, as well as practicing homosexuals join in the event that would never come to a Cru meeting. In total we had about 200-225 people involved (as a 2 1/2 year old movement, we only have about 70 students involved, so the turnout was awesome.) The greater joy: we were able to raise close to \$9,000 which will go directly to the Aruna Project in Mumbai to help rescue women and children out of the sexual slave trade. Awesome stuff.”

After the April 2011 Aruna 5K: “Our Aruna 5K had close to 1200 people involved (online financial sponsors, participants, and volunteers). We saw about \$27,000 raised. Some fun conversations as well. Good news, good deeds... Good stuff.” (View [Aruna mini-documentary](#).)

TRAIN AND EQUIP FOR BLENDING THE WORKS AND WORDS OF THE GOSPEL

Even though high school football was a long time ago for me, I still have a vivid memory of intercepting a pass and running through the entire opposing team. At the 2 yard line, I got so excited about scoring that I fumbled the football into mid-air even though no one was anywhere near me. How embarrassing!

If we develop a good theology of integral movements, cast vision for integral movements, and plan out great opportunities for people to blend the works and words of the gospel but don’t train and equip people, it’s like fumbling on the two yard line. We don’t want to get people all excited about participating with God to build His Kingdom, but not give them tools for accomplishing the task. We need tools, and we need to teach people to use them well. You’ll find the following tools, along with dozens more, at crupressgreen.com/action.

“[The Christian and Good Deeds](#)” (Student Bible study - crupressgreen.com/the-christian-and-good-deeds)

“[Misunderstood](#)” (Sharing the gospel to explain good deeds - crupressgreen.com/misunderstood)

“[The Gospel – Key to Change](#)” (Tim Keller article)

“[The Cosmic Code](#)” (Gospel conversation guide)

“[Perspective](#)” (a very relational way to engage people in gospel conversations)

DEVELOP STRATEGIES AND METHODS

The Scriptures teach that God has uniquely and intentionally designed our DNA structure (Psalm 139), intentionally orchestrated our every circumstance to shape us according to His will (Rom. 8:28-30), specifically gifted us according to His wisdom (Eph. 4:1-8), and created a set of good works for us to walk in (Eph. 2:10). This all points to the thrilling prospect of sinful humans like us, having been redeemed by the blood of Christ, now able to participate with the God of the universe in redeeming humanity and restoring all that is broken in the world. If we apply these great truths to our Cru movements—as well as to our own lives—it precipitates some great questions, like:

- How has God intentionally designed and gifted



- our staff team and movement?
- What good works has God prepared for us – locally or globally – to walk in?
- What does He want us to help set right in Jesus Name?
- Where can we uniquely help bring Kingdom change to broken places and systems?
- And where are connections to “win, build, send” ministry among students and faculty?

Below you'll find a list of major Campus Ministry partners for evangelism and social justice and great stories of local movements finding ways to blend proclamation and demonstration of Gospel truth and love on Cru Press Green. But this is only the beginning. God is continually writing the story of how He is using His people to expand the loving reign and rule of Jesus over people, families, communities, and even over broken places and systems in the world.

ALL FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

Jesus alone satisfies the deepest longings of the human heart. He alone can rescue and save. There is salvation—in its fullest sense of the word—for individuals and for the entire human race, only in Jesus' Name. By God's great grace, let us build movements of professors and students who disciple leaders and influencers, gather orphans into loving arms, happily sacrifice time to tutor an at-risk child, work tirelessly to help rescue minors trapped in the sex trade, and give their lives to loose the chains of injustice and bind up the broken-hearted in Jesus Name—all the while employing words to point to His supremacy and sufficiency, proclaim His excellencies, and explain the saving power of His character, substitutionary death, and resurrection life. Always, our hope is for the glory of God. “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16)

APPENDIX I: PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING, CONVICTIONS, AND PHILOSOPHY

Key Passages about Declaring and Demonstrating Gospel Truth

There's a host of **Old Testament** passages that teach us to proclaim the excellencies of our great God and Savior, and to show compassion for—or seek justice

on behalf of—the widow, orphan, alien, and poor. For instance, Old Testament writers, especially the Psalmists, repeatedly exhort us to “tell of the wondrous works of God” (e.g. Ps. 145) so that his ways “may be known on earth, [his] saving power among all nations” (Ps. 67:2). Moses, the Prophets, and the Poets also repeatedly exhort us to show compassion for the poor and oppressed—to “loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free...to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house...” (Isaiah 58:6ff)—because God Himself “executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing” (Dt. 10:18).

Some key OT passages re: proclaiming God's greatness: Deut. 32; Psalm 67; Isaiah 40:9ff

Some key OT passages re: showing God's compassion for the widow, orphan, alien, and poor: Ex. 22:21-27; 23:1-9; Lev. 19:9-18; 25:35ff; Psalm 41:1; 68:5,6; Prov. 3:28; 14:31; 19:17; Isaiah 58:1-12; 61:1-6; 65:17-25; Jer. 22:16; 29:4-7; Ez. 16:49-50; Micah 6:8)

When we come to the **New Testament** and observe the life of Jesus, it's obvious that He was continually proclaiming the Kingdom, teaching people the liberating truth and wisdom of God, and bringing help and healing to the hungry, paralyzed, leprosy, lame, deaf, mute, blind, demon-possessed, and broken-hearted; and new life to those in the grip of death. In his Gospel, Matthew summarizes Jesus' ministry as proclaiming, teaching, and healing (Cf. Mt. 4:23 and 9:35, which are “bookends” to a major section of the book.) And, of course, the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ takes up a major section of Matthew and the other three gospels—for it is the perfectly righteous life of Jesus (on our behalf), his death (in our place), resurrection, and ascension that form the foundation for the redemption and restoration of the human race and for all creation.

(Key passages re: the work of Christ to redeem humanity and restore all of creation: Acts 3:1-26; Romans 8:18-25; Eph. 1:3-10; Col. 1:15-20; Rev. 21:1-27.)

Following their Master, believers in the **book of Acts** prayed for boldness to speak the word of God, even in the face of opposition, and for power to heal—and God answered their prayers in a big way! Jesus had inaugurated a new Kingdom, and the signs



(or “previews”) of that Kingdom began to show up in the midst of—and all around—the newly founded Church of Jesus Christ. Joyful worship, hunger for God’s Word, faith-filled prayer, meaningful fellowship, sacrificial sharing of material goods, explosive growth (Acts 2:42-47; 3:23-37); bold proclamation (Acts 2:14-41; 4:29-31); the lame “walking and leaping” (e.g. Acts 3:1-26; cf. Isa. 35:6); care for the vulnerable (Acts 6:1-7); the “nations” gathered in through gospel proclamation (Acts 8:26-40; 10 & 11); sacrificial giving in the face of famine (Acts 11:27-30) all revealed new life in Christ, a new community of faith, and a new Kingdom where the King uses His people to begin His long-intended redemption of the human race and the restoration of a broken world.

The Apostle Paul is known for his zeal to preach the gospel (Acts 20:25; Rom. 15:20-21), and by his own testimony was “eager” to care for the poor (Gal. 2:10). Paul also continually reminds his young protégés Timothy and Titus to teach sound doctrine (the gospel) and to cultivate zeal for good works in the people of God. For example, Paul wrote to Titus:

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Titus 2:11-14 (cf. 3:4-8)

Likewise, the **Apostle Peter** taught believers scattered all over the known world that the Christian gospel is:

Personal – The gospel saves individuals, causing them to be “born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” and guaranteeing them an “inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading” (1:3-5).
But it is also...

Communal, Cultural, and Transformational – The gospel creates a new community with a new culture that is different from the prevailing culture and has a transforming effect on it through good deeds (2:1-12). This culture is characterized by personal purity; by sincere, earnest, and pure love toward believers; and by good deeds for the lost, even those who persecute

us (1:13-25; 2:12; 2:15; 3:9, 13-17; 4:19). (N.b. Drawn from Tim Keller’s “Gospel Centered Ministry,” listed in following section of resources.)

In summary, the Scriptures teach us to proclaim the greatness of God, the excellencies of His character, His saving power for all peoples, and to rejoice in our firm hope that He will redeem the human race and restore everything in all creation that was lost in the Fall. The Scriptures also teach us that God is filled with compassion, is Himself “the father of the fatherless,” and holds his people to a unique accountability to care for the widow, orphan, alien, and poor. And when Jesus breaks into human history, with incomprehensible grace and mercy, he redeems a people and so captivates their hearts that they have to speak of His great love, and they’re so overwhelmed with His mercy that they want to extend mercy to those most in need.

Resources for sharpening your theology of integral movements (all at crupressgreen.com/action unless otherwise listed):

Brief Article:

[“A Mighty River or a Slippery Slope?”](#) by Mark Labberton. Examining the cultural and theological forces behind the new interest in justice.

Longer Articles:

[“Lausanne: Evangelism and Social Responsibility: An Evangelical Commitment”](#)

“Converted to the Kingdom: Social Action Among College Students Today” by Evan Hunter

[“Gospel Centered Ministry”](#) by Tim Keller

Video or Audio Messages:

[“The Both/And of the Gospel”](#) (Tim Keller)

[Bill Hybels’ interview with Bono](#) (Willow Creek Leadership Summit)

[Series on Mercy and Justice](#) (Redeemer Presbyterian Church):

[The Gospel and the Poor: A Case for Compassion](#) (Tim Keller) (Related article)

[Poverty, Charity & Justice in the Early Church](#) (John Dickson)

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[Gospel Centered Ministry](#) (Tim Keller)

Books:

Generous Justice by Tim Keller

The Externally Focused Church by Rick Rusaw and Eric Swanson

Good News About Injustice by Gary Haugen

Charity and Its Fruits by Jonathan Edwards

Bible Studies:

[The Christian and Good Deeds](#) (Bible study developed by Cru staff member Andy Swanson)

[The Faith Effect: God's love in the world](#)

[Micah Challenge: Who is our Neighbor?](#) (four studies)

[IJM / Cru Social Justice Studies](#) (three studies)

APPENDIX 2: CLARIFYING YOUR VISION

All available at crupressgreen.com/action

["Evangelism and Social Justice"](#) – Ron Sanders

["Joining in God's Story"](#) – Ryan Berg

["Launching Justice Movements"](#) – Libby Swenson

["Win, Build, Send in the Context of Love"](#) – Chip Scivicque

["Why Justice Matters"](#) – Libby Swenson