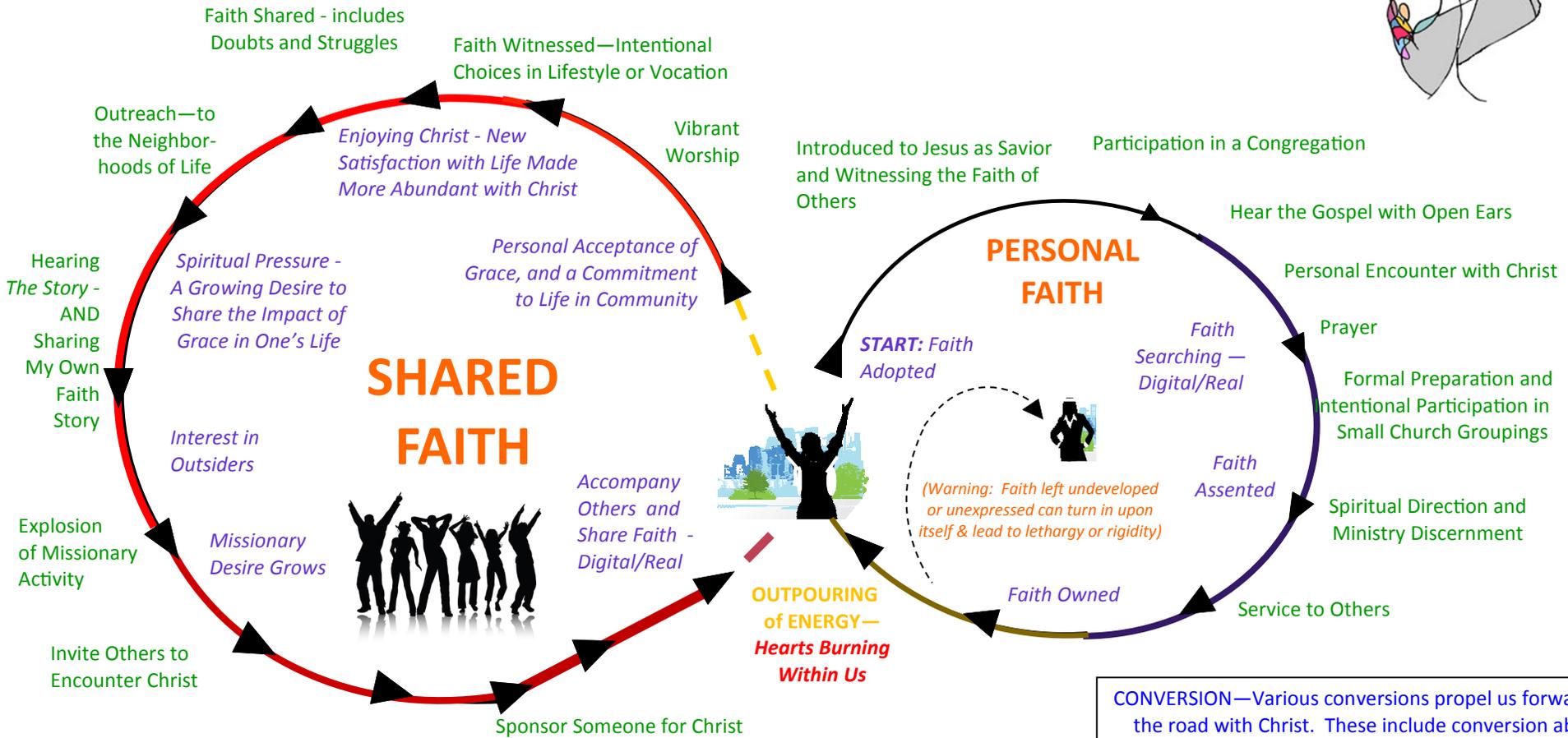
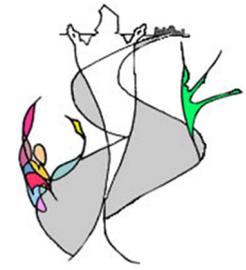


A Missionary Discipleship

The path of encountering Christ, following Christ, seeking Christ, finding joy in Christ, and sharing Christ

- by Dennis Mahaney 2015



From a faith adopted... to faith: searched, appreciated, owned, lived, witnessed and shared.

Most people start out life with the “adopted” faith of parents and community (diagram at center and moving around to the left). This happened with the disciples who encountered Jesus along the road to Emmaus and this dynamic of discipleship continues along the road of life today. Experiences and encounters cause a variety of conversions in life (see chart to right) leading to a vibrant and missionary faith. These conversion events repeat in life—digital and real, causing ever deeper reflection and response. While the order of such milestones may vary, as a person recognizes the action of God in one’s life, still faith grows and generates energy. This energy— a certain enjoyment or gratitude, causes an inner spiritual pressure. And just as with all pressure, a healthy faith must be expressed. There are many ways to express the joy or gratitude that accompanies faith: study, service, piety, lifestyle, speech, avocation, and explicit acts of witness or choices on behalf of justice in the world. Without a constructive outlet spiritual pressure can turn inward upon itself with less productive consequences. Faith turned inward - unexpressed or unexercised, can cause indifference, doctrinal rigidity, lethargy, relativism, excessive or mechanistic piety, & an intolerance for frailties in self and others. Vital parishes call disciples to encounter, follow, seek, enjoy and share their faith in Jesus Christ. This dynamic perpetuates faith—across the generations, spans digital spaces, demographics & cultures.

CONVERSION—Various conversions propel us forward along the road with Christ. These include conversion about ...

- God:** from a distant force to a close, caring person
- Church:** from speaking of “it” ... to speaking of “us”
- Faith:** from knowing about Jesus... to knowing Jesus
- Self:** from self-rule... to self surrender
- Life:** from a series of events and problems... to a journey into purpose, meaning and mystery. Even suffering becomes a source of life more abundant.
- Truth:** from acceptance... to appreciation, to full, grateful assent of mind and will
- Mission:** from personal satisfaction/salvation... to a life of compassion, service and reliance upon God for all.

(Conversions—adapted from *Sharing the Faith That You Love* by John & Therese Boucher, 2013—www.wau.org)