

INVISIBLE KINGDOMS ORIENTATION

Learning to See

A two session introduction to the systems beneath visible outcomes

Begin here to learn Durable Church's way of seeing. Return to the full twelve-week Invisible Kingdoms study after the seven Builder Movements.

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Two sessions before the formation cycle

Each session is designed for 90 minutes. Read the passage in your preferred Bible translation. Bring one repeated outcome from a church, team, household, or piece of work. The goal is not to solve it in two meetings; the goal is to see it more truthfully and carry a better question into From Survival to Stewardship.

10 minutes	Arrive, pray, and name the outcome
20 minutes	Read the passage twice and notice what changes
25 minutes	Read and discuss the teaching
25 minutes	Build together
10 minutes	Transfer, pray, and name the next step

A SHARED POSTURE

How we see together

- Describe before diagnosing.
- Treat every map as a revisable hypothesis.
- Include people closest to the consequences.
- Use systems language to deepen responsibility, never to excuse harm.
- Let Jesus and his kingdom govern what we call flourishing.

See the outcome before explaining it

Learn to describe what repeatedly happens before deciding why it happens.

Read

Read Mark 8:22-26 slowly twice. On the second reading, mark what the passage shows about seeing, listening, responsibility, authority, or change.

Understand and notice

The man at Bethsaida receives sight in stages. Jesus asks what he sees, attends to the incomplete answer, and continues the work. The passage gives us a posture for seeing systems: honest observation, humility about partial sight, and willingness to look again.

When an outcome repeats, we often reach immediately for a culprit or a solution. Systems thinking begins earlier. It asks us to describe the visible pattern, listen to people who experience it differently, and separate evidence from explanation. A faithful map is not a verdict. It is a shared, revisable account of what is happening.

Jesus does not shame partial sight. He stays present and continues the healing. Durable Church begins here because congregations need a way to notice patterns without blaming people or pretending to see everything at once.

Reflect and discuss

- What outcome keeps repeating in your church, team, household, or work?
- What can you observe directly? What are you currently assuming?
- Who experiences this outcome differently from you?

Build transfer and pray

Build

Write one neutral outcome statement. Include what happens, how often, who is affected, and what evidence you have. Do not name a cause yet.

Transfer

Read the statement to someone close to the outcome. Ask only: What is accurate, what is missing, and what have I interpreted as fact? Revise it in their presence.

Pray

Jesus, give us honest sight. Free us from the need to be quickly certain. Help us notice people, patterns, and consequences with humility, courage, and love. Amen.

See the system beneath the outcome

Make a first map of the structures, stories, incentives, information, and authority shaping a repeated outcome.

Read

Read Acts 6:1-7 slowly twice. On the second reading, mark what the passage shows about seeing, listening, responsibility, authority, or change.

Understand and notice

Acts 6 begins with a repeated unequal outcome: Greek-speaking widows are being overlooked in the daily distribution. The apostles do not dismiss the complaint as discontent, blame individual workers, or solve the problem privately. They listen, name the structural need, involve the community, clarify responsibility, and give real authority to trusted people.

A system is more than a process diagram. It includes the stories people believe, the information they can see, the decisions they may make, the behavior that receives reward, the labor that remains hidden, and the voices the arrangement makes easy to ignore. These elements interact and produce outcomes even when individuals mean well.

Systems thinking in a church must remain accountable to Jesus. It does not excuse personal sin, reduce people to components, or claim total sight. It helps a community repent concretely by changing the arrangements that keep producing harm or dependence.

Reflect and discuss

- What story does your current system tell about success, urgency, trust, or leadership?
- Who has information? Who may decide? Who carries invisible work or absorbs risk?
- Which affected voice is missing from your present understanding?

Build transfer and pray

Build

Place the repeated outcome at the center of a page. Around it, map people, stories, structures, information, incentives, authority, and hidden labor. Draw arrows where one element reinforces another.

Transfer

Invite one affected person who was not in the room to challenge the map. Carry one revised observation and one honest question into From Survival to Stewardship.

Pray

God of truth and mercy, show us what our arrangements make easy, what they make difficult, and whom they overlook. Give us courage to listen and wisdom to change what love requires. Amen.

CONTINUE

Carry the question into From Survival to Stewardship

You have named one repeated outcome and made a first map of the system beneath it. Do not confuse the map with mastery. The next study turns attention toward the habits, responsibilities, relationships, and formation required of people who will faithfully carry change.

- Bring your revised outcome statement.
- Bring your first system map.
- Bring the name of one person whose perspective still needs to be heard.
- Bring one question you are willing to hold without forcing an immediate answer.