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# KLESIS

## God's Call and the Journey of Faith

Kathy Dobbins, Colin Harris, Doris Nelms

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Responding to God’s call on our lives is an important step in our faith development. *Klesis* is a process, first developed in 1997 by Kathy Dobbins, Colin Harris and Doris Nelms which has helped congregations, clergy and laity to hear God’s call and respond to that call with their gifts. CBF is proud to partner with Nurturing Faith to offer this revised and updated version of *Klesis* so that another generation of CBF leaders can respond to God’s call upon their lives and use their gifts to serve God’s world.

*Klesis* is a resource CBF is including in the Dawnings Suite of Resources. *Dawnings (Welcoming a New Day in Your Church's Missional Journey)* is CBF's process that offers to help congregations and individuals see the world and their ministries within it with fresh clarity and purpose. Dawnings invites participants to ask, “God, what would you have me to do?” and “God, what would you have me to be?” as they participate in the three processes of Visioning, Forming and Engaging.

*Klesis* is included in the VISIONING process of Dawnings. The question asked in this process of Dawnings is: How do we learn to see what the God who is present among us is doing? As a resource, *Klesis* will help you learn to see what God is doing with you and through you in the world. I hope you find this revised and updated version of *Klesis* helpful as you consider God’s call upon your life.

— Rev. Joshua M. Speight  
Missional Congregations Resources  
Manager, CBF

May, 2016



Other resources available in the Dawnings Suite of Resources

## VISIONING

*Leadership in Constant Change*

## FORMING

*Becoming Like Christ: Helping Children Follow Jesus* (revised 2016)

*Becoming Like Christ: Helping Youth Follow Jesus* (revised 2016)

*Prayers of the People* — CBF’s Yearlong Guide to Prayer

CBF’s Missions Education Resources (*Spark, Form, Summersalt, Affect, e3*)

## ENGAGING

*Pivot: Realigning Teams Toward God’s Mission Near and Far*

*PilgriMission: Transforming by Being Transformed*

# The Story of *Klesis*

**I**n 1997, the staff ministers of Smoke Rise Baptist Church (Stone Mountain, Ga.) challenged us to identify ways to have more of our members involved. What evolved from those meetings was a curriculum built around Dave Stark's *LifeKeys* which later became our own process. In 2001, CBF published it as *Klesis*. It was subsequently reprinted in 2007.

We began with the theme “Every Member *is* a Minister” and explored ways to understand gifts, callings and ministry. We’ve been fortunate to lead workshops, seminars and retreats using this material. Each experience was an affirmation and appreciation of the process far beyond our expectations.

*Klesis* is a collection of and reflection upon stories of members who have identified their gifts and translated those gifts into ministry. It is a study designed to assist participants in ways to identify patterns, preferences and gifts for individual or group application.

— Kathy Dobbins, Colin Harris, Doris Nelms  
Members, Smoke Rise Baptist Church, 2016



## Is the Klesis Study Right For Your Church?

It is an understatement to say that people are selective about where they will invest their time and energies. We live in a culture with a “cafeteria” approach to life.

People like choices and a variety of options from which to pick when thinking about their personal and spiritual needs. *Klesis* is a process that focuses heavily on the inner journey. This will limit the number of people who will participate to those who want to engage in this level of study and who are willing to make the time in their schedules.

We have found that a personal invitation to a class like *Klesis* is the most effective way to enlist participants. After promoting this process in a church setting for the last five years, we have gone through some significant changes in expectation.

When we began, we were ready for *Klesis* to sweep through our church like a revival fire. In reality, the fire was more like a spark! Those sparks, however, were steady and have continued to grow in the lives of those who have gone on the journey with us.

We have witnessed positive changes in how many of the participants view themselves and their gifts. We have seen people step out on faith and try new things. Perhaps best of all is the bonding that has taken place among these folk as they have listened to one another and formed relationships that were not there before.

## A Few Other Observations

As individuals began to understand and acknowledge what they were good at doing, they began to feel a sense of self with new confidence. As individuals came to understand their preferences, they also acknowledged the differences of those people with whom they lived and worked, which created communication about those differences and gave value to those differences.

*Klesis* opens several doors of thinking about self and others differently. The *Klesis* process may not provide all the answers to the questions raised during this study.

Our experience has been that a steady presence of being on the journey together is a deepening experience for all involved.

And the leader certainly needs to keep in touch with those who come back asking for more information and assistance. Our e-mail ministry works well with this connection, but it is helpful to remember how easy it is to get caught in the trap of trying to give them the answers to their journey questions.