

CRAIG GROESCHEL: Bringing the Gospel With Innovative Strategies

Founder and Senior Pastor of Craig Groeschel is a pioneer in bringing the gospel message into the 21st century with innovative strategies and practical application.

A year after serving as a United Methodist pastor in Oklahoma City during the 1995 bombing that rocked the community and the nation, Groeschel founded Life Covenant Church in a two-car garage. Using a nontraditional style gleaned from market research he did into why non-churchgoers avoided church, he saw the congregation of Life Covenant begin to grow.

One major innovation came when, forced to miss Sunday service because of the birth of one of his children, Groeschel videotaped a sermon for his congregation instead. Videos, he soon found, were tremendously popular, and, along with technological innovations of streaming content over the Internet, soon exploded his messages' popularity and reach.

The now-rebranded has more than 24 campuses, drawing tens of thousands of attendees each week. His bold vision for streaming broadcasts and other online offerings have also helped elevate Groeschel's impact. One of the largest churches in the country, has been named America's Most Innovative Church multiple times, an award that reflects the creative genius of its founder along with innovation leader Bobby Gruenewald.

Perhaps one of the greatest and most far-reaching of Groeschel's innovations is the YouVersion app. Embracing the digital age as an unprecedented vehicle for spreading the Word of God, the Bible app brings myriad translations of Scripture to users' tablets and smartphones, all for free.

Already downloaded more than 182 million times, the app offers more than 1,000 versions of Scripture and 780 languages, as well as helpful search tools to facilitate both Bible study and quick reference. YouVersion, like , stands as a testament to Groeschel's vision to harness technology to reach the world for Christ, and the results more than speak for themselves.