

Church Planting (Part Two)

PRINCIPLES WE FOLLOW TO PLANT SELF-MULTIPLYING CHURCHES

1. **Look On The Fields** – John 4:34. You must have a heart of **love** for the field or area you are called to work in. Acts 16 – the Macedonian Call – “...Come and help us...” But, remember 2 Cor.10:12-18, and be careful not to stretch **beyond** the measure of rule God has given us. You do not want to drain the Mother church.
2. **Cast Out The Nets** – Luke 5:1-5 – Cultivate & create effective means of **gathering** people.
3. **Edify & Equip The Body** – Eph. 4:11-16. Building loving and serving relationships among the congregation through:
 - a. **Fellowship** events where relationships can be formed,
 - b. Effective **follow-up** with people.
 - c. **Teachers** that build and equip people.
 - d. Leaders that serve as **role models** in all this...
4. **Select & Build A Leadership Team** – Your ability to do this will determine your long-term **growth**. You will need:
 - a. A conscious plan to **find** and **develop** leaders.
 - b. A list of potential **positions** to fill.
 - c. A list of potential **leaders**.

Some of your initial leaders may be like scaffolding – their giftings are great to begin with, but insufficient to take the group further. It is wise not to make any **long-term** promises or commitments. It is easy to set leaders in but difficult to get them out.

5. **Organize For The Spontaneous Multiplication Of Churches** - If you don't, you will end up doing it anyway, only it will be the wrong way. If your goal is to build the biggest church in town, you will **hang on** to every ministry gift, causing **frustration** and **rebellion**. Dr. George says that the Lord spoke to him when he released his 1st associate and said, *“For every one you release, I will give you two of like quality and character”*, and He has been faithful to do it! VCI was developed for the purpose of reproducing leaders and churches that would work together for the continued expansion of God's Kingdom!!
6. **It Is Going To Take Obedience** – We need to simply obey the church planting vision of the Great Commission – Matt.28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:8. See what happens when we do not Acts 8:1-4!!! When the purposes of God come up against an impossible or hard situation, **miracles** will take place – Acts 5:32. We need to step out Acts 16:6-40; Matt.14:22-33.

CHOOSING A LOCATION & PENETRATING THE COMMUNITY

Many of the principles we're going to discuss here are very simple. But, it's for that very reason that so many people overlook them. Never despise the small things. It's the “little foxes” that spoil the vine. Sometimes it's just a little thing that will cause us to succeed in an area that we've struggled in, in the past.

1. **“SPY OUT” THE LAND** The first thing you need to do, when you're considering an area for a church plant, is drive around the area and pray. As you drive through the area, observe the people. Look for potential church facilities. Look for schools, community halls, churches, and lease rentals. Don't eliminate anything simply because you “don't want to go there.” How will you know until God shows you?

Drive around and pray in tongues. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you? Attend every Spirit-filled church in the area to see what is available. Can you do it any different (or better)? If there are several churches that are the same “flavor” as your church will be, you may want to reconsider your plans to plant there.

- a. Determine the approximate “**age**” of the area you are considering. If you go into an older area, chances are you will find a lot of older people who are set in their ways. It’s better to go into a new development. Most of the residents will be “young families” with no definite mindset toward religion.
- b. What is the **population** of the area? What is the potential growth for our church? Is there an expected increase of population in the area you’re planning to go? Which way is the city growing? Where are the new homes being built? That’s the place to go, because you’ve got new “fish” coming in, all the time.
- c. Are there pockets of ethnic groups in the area? If you’re going to plant in that area, you need to learn about those ethnic people, so when you go to reach out to them, you already know what they believe. Know how to win different ethnic groups to Jesus!
- d. Are the people in the area receptive to the Gospel? If they aren’t open to the Gospel, you don’t need to be there! You’ve got to go where the fish are biting!!

2. **DEVELOP YOUR STRATEGY**

- a. *Know what you are fishing for.* In Matthew 10:5-6, Jesus instructed His disciples, “Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Jesus’ instruction “narrowed down” their target. In the natural, different kinds of bait are required to catch different kinds of fish. The same thing is true spiritually.
- b. *Go to where the fish are **biting**.* Jesus told his disciples to shake the dust off their feet, and move on to another place, when the people openly rejected their message. In other words, If the fish aren’t biting in one location, then change locations!
- c. *Learn to **think like a fish (an unbeliever)**!* One of the best ways to find out what unbelievers are thinking is to go out and do a survey! Ask the residents the following questions:
 - i. What is the greatest need in this area? (Who’d know more than the residents?)
 - ii. Are you actively attending any church?
 - iii. Why do you think that most people don’t attend church?
 - iv. If you were looking for a church to attend, what kinds of things would you look for? (Then, when you send out flyers, use those very suggestions on the flyer.)
 - v. What advice can you give to a minister who really wants to help people?

- ## 3. **REACH OUT TO YOUR COMMUNITY**
- What’s your target? Study the demographics. Ask yourself, “Who am I targeting?” Ultimately, you will reach those that are most like yourself. You attract what you are!! When people walk into a church, the first thing they do (either consciously or unconsciously) is look around to see if there’s anyone who is like them. That’s why we tell our churches not to take the children out before the service starts. If the children go to their classes before the adult service even starts, then when visitors come in, they’ll think that the church has no children and they won’t be back! Instead, you should let the children come in (at least for the first song!). Then, after the first praise song, the pastor can get up, pray and dismiss the children to their classes.

- ## 4. **COMMUNICATE YOUR MESSAGE**
- The Bible determines our Message, but our target determines when, where and how we **communicate** it. The message is sacred - the Word of God never changes - but our method *must* change to meet the needs of our target group. Jesus targeted His ministry in order to be effective, not to be exclusive. We’re not trying to exclude anybody from our church. Everyone is welcome to come, but we need to have something to shoot at. When you’re first starting a church, you can’t compete with the church down the street that has 5,000 members, millions of dollars, a great facility and every gift you can think of in the church. There is one advantage that a small church has over a large church - it can be intimate and caring. The pastor can be touchable, and know everyone by name. Take that and major on it! You can build an awesome church!

- ## 5. **WHY DO VISITORS COME BACK?**
- As a rule, the pastor is not the one who attracts first time visitors. But, he is a major reason why visitors come back. There are any number of reasons why people attend a church for the first time. But, one thing is sure - they won’t come back unless there’s something about the

message, something about the pastor, something about the church service that drew them back. Ask yourself, "*What kind of a person am I? Am I a friendly person?*" If you're not friendly, you're already losing. Second time visitors to the church are hot contacts. Never let people leave because of your slothfulness! People need to know how much you care. If you're having a lot of visitors, but none of them are staying, ask yourself why! If you don't *know* why, then go back to your visitors cards, and phone every person and ask *them* why they didn't come back!

6. **MAKING CONTACTS** Friends and relatives of new converts are **warm** contacts because you already have something in common. Hurting people make good "fish". *Show* them the Gospel! Touch them with the Love of God! First time parents or engaged couples are also in a very vulnerable time. They've never been a parent before and they don't have a clue what to do. It's a good time to minister to them at their point of need with some parenting classes. Read the obituaries, the births and the marriages. Then, send a card to those people. Focus on reaching receptive people.