



CHURCH PLANTING PRIMER

**Why New Churches Are Needed
And How They Are Started**



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SESSION ONE: A Biblical Rationale for Church Planting

"Church planting is the normal business of the local church and the local church is where Christians are taught to obey everything Jesus commanded" - MARK DEVER

1. Church planting is _____ because the church is _____.

What role does the church currently play in our society?

How do Christians view the church?

"We love the church because Christ loved the church. She is his bride—a harlot at times, but his bride nonetheless, being washed clean by the word of God (Eph. 5:25-26). If you are into Jesus, don't rail on his bride. Jesus died for the church, so don't be bothered by a little dying to self for the church's sake. If you keep in mind that everyone there is a sinner (including yourself) and that Jesus Christ is the point and not you, your dreams, or your kids, your church experience might not be as lame as you fear."

- KEVIN DEYOUNG & TED KLUCK, CHURCH: LOVE IT, DON'T LEAVE IT

WHY SHOULD WE LOVE THE CHURCH?

- Because Christ _____ the church
Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. - [Ephesians 5:25](#)
- Because we can't _____ Christ without the church
So that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. - [1 Corinthians 12:25-26](#)
- Because the world can't _____ Christ without the church
So that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. - [Ephesians 3:10](#)

- Because the church is _____

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. - [Ephesians 3:20-21](#)

CHURCH PLANTING IN THE BIBLE

Virtually all the great evangelistic challenges of the New Testament are basically calls to plant churches, not simply to share the faith. - TIM KELLER

If you're looking closely, you'll see church planting all over the New Testament. For example:

- _____ was a church planter.
- _____ was a church planter.
- The _____ were church planters.
- The _____ _____ is a call to plant churches.

CHURCH PLANTING IN ACTS

In the book of Acts alone we have dozens of references* to church planting:

- Jesus authorizes his Apostles to plant the first church in Jerusalem to be a base for spreading the gospel around the world ([Acts 1:8](#); [2:1-47](#)).
- In Acts 8, Philip preaches the gospel effectively during the persecution and scattering of the Jerusalem church in Samaria. Philip had been previously affirmed both by the church as a whole and its senior leaders ([Acts 6:1-7](#)).
- In Acts 9, Saul (Paul), the greatest missionary the world will ever know is converted from a persecutor of the church to a planter of churches. The leaders of the Jerusalem church confirm Saul's calling ([Acts 9:26-31](#)).

- In Acts 11, the church at Antioch takes shape born out of the Jerusalem persecution. A man named Barnabas was sent by the Jerusalem church to authenticate and lead this new church ([Acts 11:19-26](#)).
- Barnabas brought Paul along and together they formed a team that would plant churches all throughout the region. In [Acts 13:1-4](#), Paul and Barnabas were called directly by the Holy Spirit on mission to launch new churches. The church prayed and fasted and affirmed their calling through the laying on of hands by other leaders at Antioch.
- Paul's missionary ministry of planting churches forms the rest of the story of Acts. He preaches the gospel in every city, plants new faith communities called churches and remains until approved elders are in place to shepherd the new work going forward ([Acts 14:23](#), [Titus 1:5](#)).
- Paul also remained under the authority of the church in Jerusalem that had first sent him out ([Acts 15:6-35](#)).

**List compiled by Dave Bruskas*

"We encourage our members to leave us to found other Churches; nay, we seek to persuade them to do it. We ask them to scatter throughout the land to become the goodly seed, which God shall bless. I believe that so long as we do this we shall prosper."

– CHARLES SPURGEON

SESSION TWO: The Need for New Churches

"A net gain of 3,205 churches is needed each year for the American church to keep up with population growth; this is far [greater] than the actual yearly gain." - DAVID T. OLSON

2. Church planting is _____ because the church is _____.

Does the fact that the church in America is dwindling surprise you?

Why do you think churches are dwindling?

"Between the years 2010 and 2012, more than half of all churches in America added not one new member. Each year, nearly 3 million more previous churchgoers enter the ranks of the 'religiously unaffiliated.'"

– HUFFINGTON POST

Church Planting is important because most existing churches are _____
or _____.

"Today, of the approximately 350,000 churches in America, four out of five are either plateaued or declining. Many churches begin a plateau or slow decline about their fifteenth to eighteenth year. 80-85% are on the down-side of this cycle."

– WIN ARN

SO WHY NOT JUST HELP DYING CHURCHES?

We should help dying churches, but church renewal is not enough. We must also plant churches to reach people with the gospel. We have to increase the “birth rate” (by planting new churches) and decrease the “death rate” (by helping old churches). We should do everything we can to help renew churches in our city that have fallen on hard times, and we should do everything we can do to plant new churches in our communities.

What’s happening to the church?

- The church is getting _____.

Some Statistics:

- The average American church has 75 members
- Over the past 50 years we have seen an explosion of megachurches in North America.
- 50% of all churches in America average less than 100 in worship attendance.
- 40% of all churches in America average between 100 and 350 in attendance.
- 10% of all churches in America average more than 350 in attendance.

- The church is getting _____.

More Statistics:

- Gallup polls report that about 40% of the population claims regular church attendance.
- Only about 17% of Americans attend church regularly.
- Each year the population of the United States is growing but the percentage of Americans attending church is decreasing.

"We knew that over the past 30 to 40 years, denominations had increasingly reported a decline in their numbers," Marler says. "Even a still-growing denomination like the Southern Baptist Convention had reported slowed growth. Most of the mainline denominations were all reporting a net loss over the past 30 years. And at the same time, the Gallup polls had remained stable. It didn't make sense."

- KIRK HARDAWAY AND PENNY LONG MARLER

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE CHURCH?

- The church is getting more _____.

An example from the life of a circuit-riding preacher:

Jacob Young was just 26 years old when in 1802 he took on the responsibility of forming a new Methodist circuit along the Green River in Kentucky. He had little prior training and little prospect of outside assistance. He developed his own strategy to evangelize the region: "I concluded to travel five miles... then stop, reconnoiter the neighborhood and find some kind person who would let me preach in his log-cabin and so on till I had performed the entire round." On a number of occasions he found groups already gathered, waiting for a preacher to arrive. Wherever he could, he established class meetings run by local leaders to carry on the work in his absence. In one location he discovered a society run by Jacob, an illiterate African-American slave. Jacob's preaching and leadership impressed Young. By the end of his first year as a circuit-rider, Young had gathered 301 new members and for his efforts received just \$30 – a cost of 10 cents per new member. Circuit riders like Jacob Young began with little formal education. But they soon became students as they followed the example of Wesley and Asbury who used their time on horseback for reading.

"Professionalism has nothing to do with the essence and the heart of the Christian ministry. The more professional we long to be, the more spiritual death we will leave in our wake. For there is no professional childlikeness, there is no professional tenderheartedness; there is no professional panting after God."

– JOHN PIPER

- The church is getting more _____.

- The church is getting less _____.

SO WHY IS THE CHURCH DWINDLING?

"The vigorous, continual planting of new congregations is the single most crucial strategy for 1) the numerical growth of the Body of Christ in any city, and 2) the continual corporate renewal and revival of the existing churches in a city. Nothing else--not crusades, outreach programs, para-church ministries, growing mega-churches, congregational consulting, nor church renewal processes--will have the consistent impact of dynamic, extensive church planting...The only way to be truly sure you are increasing the number of Christians in a town is to increase the number of churches. Why? Much traditional evangelism aims to get a 'decision' for Christ. Experience, however, shows us that many of these 'decisions' disappear and never result in changed lives. Why? Many, many decisions are not really conversions, but often only the beginning of a journey of seeking God. (Other decisions are very definitely the moment of a 'new birth', but this differs from person to person.) Only a person who is being 'evangelized' in the context of an on-going worshipping and shepherding community can be sure of finally coming home into vital, saving faith."

- TIM KELLER

COMMON OBJECTIONS TO CHURCH PLANTING:

- "We just don't have the _____ to send."
- "We don't have the _____."
- "Our people aren't _____ for that yet."
- "I don't feel God _____ in that direction."

SESSION THREE: How New Churches Begin

"Church attendance is as vital to a disciple as a transfusion of rich, healthy blood to a sick man."

– DWIGHT L. MOODY

MODERN CHURCH PLANTING MODELS

- **Parachute Planting**

A planter and their family move into a new location to start a church from scratch. The planter has very little connection with or existing support within the new area.

- **Sent By an Existing Church**

An existing church or church planting organization provides the initial leadership and resources (dollars and/or people) to get a new church started, including the selection of the church planter. Although the new church is autonomous, the sponsoring organization often has significant influence in the new church.

- **Partnership Between Organizations**

An organization (or many organizations) committed to church planting work together to plant churches. The participating organizations often share common beliefs and a passion for starting new churches.

- **House Church**

Small groups (5-20 people) form and multiply via a network of people meeting in homes. In some cases, the individual groups are connected to a larger network that meets together periodically in a large group setting.

- **Multi-site Church**

An existing church opens new locations. The idea is for one church to have many meeting locations. Motives range from reaching more lost people to making more room at an existing location.

- **Church Replant**

An existing struggling church decides to bury the old and plant a fresh new church. The restart may or may not be at a new location and may or may not be with the same leadership.

- **Church Split**

A split typically occurs when competing groups conclude there is less energy required to "split or divorce" than to resolve differences and reconcile.

* These church planting models were written by "Passion for Planting" and can be found at www.church-planting.net in an article titled, "Church Planting Models".

BIBLICAL CHURCH PLANTING MODELS

- The Jerusalem Model

A church in one location is scattered to numerous locations and churches are planted in the places where they are scattered. [Acts 11:19](#) clarifies, "Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews." Though the believers were not scattering from Jerusalem voluntarily, they continued to be a witness for Christ and their witness ultimately resulted in churches.

- The Antioch Model

An apostle enters a town, preaches the gospel, and organizes those who come to faith into a new church. This is the model of church planting that Paul used throughout his church planting journeys in [Acts 13-20](#). It seems to be the pattern of the apostle Paul to provide basic instruction on the Christian life and then to appoint elders to "Put in order what remains" ([Titus 1:5](#)) or in other words, to organize a new church.

- The Ephesian Model

An apostle spends quality time training several individuals who are then sent. What Paul accomplished in Ephesus was as unique as it was brilliant. He made Ephesus a training center from which the gospel would go forth and where young men could be trained to plant churches. Paul rented a meeting place called the Hall of Tyrannus where he preached and taught every day from 11:00am-4:00pm. This part of the training went on for two solid years. Paul trained the following men there:

- Titus from Antioch
- Timothy from Lystra
- Gaius from Derbe
- Aristarchus from Thessalonica
- Secundus from Thessalonica
- Sopator from Berea
- Tychicus from Ephesus
- Trophimus from Ephesus
- Epaphras from Colosse

- **The Roman Model**

Christians from various churches coordinate their efforts to plant a church together in a new area where they form a new church. This is an effective means of church planting today. The western church is saturated with experienced and knowledgeable Christians. The redistribution of Christians to cities where the gospel is needed in order to form new churches is the challenge of our day.

** These church planting models were written Frank Viola and can be found in his book, "Finding Organic Church: A Comprehensive Guide to Starting and Sustaining Authentic Christian Communities" David C. Cook © 2009*

THREE TYPES OF CHURCH PLANTERS

- **Vocational Church Planters**

Give their vocations to God as an act of worship. They make church planting their primary vocational pursuit giving themselves fully to the establishment of a new church. Vocational church planters prepare for planting by saving enough money to sustain their families until the church can fully support them or they partner with churches and other organizations that help underwrite the cost of church planting until the church reaches financial sustainability.

- **Bi-vocational Church Planters**

Church planters do what is necessary to support their family while working primarily for the financial, numerical and spiritual growth of the congregation. Generally bi-vocational planters wish to be vocational planters but are concerned about the strain a full time salary would put on the young congregation.

- **Volunteer Church Planters**

Continue with dedicated vocational employment in another field while simultaneously working to establish a new church. The majority of modern church planters fall into this category. Volunteer church planters are commonly entrepreneurs, business owners or work flexible jobs that allow them availability throughout the workday to meet with people for evangelism, discipleship or ministry. Ideally volunteer church planters work in the communities where they are planting a church. In such cases, their work environments give them the ability to make evangelistic contacts throughout the workday.

HOW DOES ONE GO ABOUT STARTING A NEW CHURCH?

There are ten basic steps included in starting a new church.

1. _____ your calling.
Am I truly called to ministry? How can I know?
2. _____ yourself and your family.
Am I ready to be a pastor? Am I prepared spiritually and emotionally? Is my family ready to support me in this endeavor?
3. _____ a mentor and a partner.
Who will guide me through the process of church planting? How do I find a mentor? Who will work with me to plant this new church?
4. _____ out your new church.
How will this new church come into being? What will we teach? What is our goal?
5. _____ necessary resources.
Where will we get the money and the other resources we need to plant this new church?
6. _____ a missionary team.
Who will work with me to plant this new church? Who will run the various ministries we will offer? How will I identify and invite others into this work with me?
7. _____ your community.
How will my community know that our church is here? How can we meet our community leaders? What can we do to cause them to trust us?
8. _____ worship services.
When should we begin weekly worship services? Where should we meet? What will the services be like? How will I learn to preach?
9. _____ your church biblically.
How will our new church be structured? Who will make the decisions in our church? How are problems dealt with in our new church? What does the bible say about church government and structure?
10. _____ the process by training new leaders.
How can we train new leaders for church planting when we still need leaders in our own church? How will we support those we send to plant new churches?

**These steps are taken from Church Planting Thresholds: A Gospel-Centered Church Planting Guide by Clint Clifton.*

SESSION FOUR: How Ordinary Christians Begin New Churches

"God uses men who are weak and feeble enough to lean on Him."

– HUDSON TAYLOR

What do you think is necessary to have in order to start a new church?

A _____ is the only necessary ingredient in church planting.

Question: Where do ready leaders come from?

Answer: They are made, not born.

_____ **make great church planters.**

- _____
- _____
- _____

Have you ever considered leading a new church? Why or why not?

They are willing to be _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

IS GOD CALLING ME TO START A NEW CHURCH?

- Calling includes _____.

The biblical qualifications for an elder apply directly to church planters. Following, you will see twenty-six qualifications of spiritual maturity that must be met by anyone desiring to serve in a pastoral capacity. Scriptures listing these qualifications can be found in [1 Timothy 3:1-7](#); [Titus 1:5-9](#); [1 Peter 5:1-4](#).

- Calling includes _____.

- Calling includes _____.

Qualifications of Elders:

1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4

1. Above reproach
2. The husband of one wife
3. Believing children
4. Sober-minded
5. Not arrogant
6. Not quick-tempered
7. Self-controlled
8. Respectable
9. Hospitable
10. Lover of good
11. Upright
12. Holy
13. Disciplined
14. Holds firm to the Word
15. Able to give sound instruction
16. Able to refute bad instruction
17. Able to teach
18. Not a drunkard
19. Not violent, but gentle
20. Not quarrelsome
21. Not a lover of money
22. Not greedy
23. Good manager of household
24. Keep children submissive
25. Not a new convert
26. Well thought of by outsiders

“CAN I STILL HELP START CHURCHES EVEN IF I’M NOT CALLED TO BE A CHURCH PLANTER?” YES!

Examples of Key Ministry Leadership Needs:

- **Prayer Advocate** – The Prayer Advocate is responsible for promoting personal and corporate prayer in the life of the new church. This person should (1) maintain a healthy and growing spiritual life and lead others to do the same; (2) establish a monthly church-wide prayer meeting for members and attendees; (3) create of an efficient means of communicating time sensitive prayer concerns to the congregation; (4) create of an efficient means of communicating church prayer needs to our supporters and partners; and (5) work with other ministry leaders to ensure that prayer plays a key role in their ministries.
- **Worship Leader** – The Worship Leader is responsible for magnifying the greatness of God and Jesus Christ through the planning, conducting, and promotion of the music and worship programs of the church. This person should (1) maintain a healthy and growing spiritual life and lead others to do the same; (2) participate regularly in leading worship music at our gatherings on Sundays and at other events from time to time; (3) recruit, develop, and lead a worship team; (4) work with our pastor to select worship song sets that are Gospel centered and Christ exalting; (5) establish and lead rehearsals; and (6) help in the oversight and coordination of other areas related to worship – sound, lights, video, etc.
- **Discipleship Director** – The Discipleship Director is responsible for promoting discipleship in the church to help people grow in both knowledge of and obedience to the Word of God. This person should (1) maintain a healthy and growing spiritual life and lead others to do the same; (2) equip mature Christians with the tools and resources necessary to disciple others; (3) identify less mature Christians in need of discipleship; and (4) establish and facilitate disciple-making relationships throughout the congregation.
- **Outreach Coordinator** – The Outreach Coordinator is responsible for the overall planning, development, and deployment of the outreach ministries of the new church, including the local, national, and international mission fields. This person should (1) maintain a healthy and growing spiritual life and lead others to do the same; (2) develop and maintain local and international mission programs; (3) recruit, train, and support a network of volunteers to lead various outreach opportunities; (4) plan and lead mission trips, both locally and abroad; (5) work with our church leadership to establish a presence for our church at community

events; and (6) network with various small groups and individuals to accomplish the outreach goals of the congregation.

- **Children’s Ministry Coordinator** – The Children’s Ministry Coordinator is responsible for the planning, conducting, promoting, and evaluating a comprehensive and balanced ministry to the children and their families. This person should (1) maintain a healthy and growing spiritual life and lead others to do the same; (2) plan programs and activities for the spiritual, emotional, and intellectual development of the children and their parents or guardians; (3) enlist and equip ministry leadership and volunteers; (4) evaluate and secure literature, resources, and teaching material; (5) develop and implement policies for the safety and security of our children: and (6) coordinate and staff the care of young children during worship services and special church-wide events.
- **Communications Coordinator** – The Communications Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the media and message of the church is consistent, biblical, and clear. This person should (1) maintain a healthy and growing spiritual life and lead others to do the same; (2) manage content and aesthetics for all forms of church communication including web, social media, and print; (3) act as the funnel through which all communications pass before being released; (4) work with various ministry heads to produce a consistent, articulate message to the community and to the congregation; (5) manage the church membership database, keeping track of visitors and those who attend outreach events hosted by the church; (6) regularly inspect the website for outdated information and broken links; (7) provide content for any of the church’s social media posts or campaigns; and (8) ensure that the best communication methods available to reach the largest number of members and attenders are being utilized.
- **Technical Director** – The Technical Director is responsible for leading a team of volunteers to provide high quality support for audio, video, and lighting used during worship gatherings and other events as needed. This person should (1) maintain a healthy and growing spiritual life and lead others to do the same; (2) recruit volunteers; (3) provide training opportunities for volunteers to gain the necessary skill set for success in their area; (4) initiate and plan ongoing training on a regular basis; (5) schedule the needed volunteers for each service or event and communicate their responsibilities in advance; (6) initiate repairs and replacements for critical equipment; and (7) establish a plan to prepare and execute quality video, display, and lighting elements for each service or event.
- **Service Coordinator** – The Service Coordinator is responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating the church worship services including service formats, order, themes, and special programs. This person should (1) maintain a

healthy and growing spiritual life and lead others to do the same; (2) manage the logistics of all worship services; (3) work alongside the preaching pastor and the service leaders to create a cohesive presentation of service elements; (4) act as the point of contact for all elements of the worship service; and (5) develop a team and a system that will keep everyone involved informed.

- **Student Ministry Director** – The Student Ministry Director is responsible for planning, conducting, promoting, and evaluating a comprehensive and balanced ministry to the youth and their families. This person should (1) maintain a healthy and growing spiritual life and lead others to do the same; (2) plan programs and activities for the spiritual, emotional, and intellectual development of the youth and their parents or guardians; (3) enlist and equip ministry leadership and volunteers; (4) evaluate and secure literature, resources, and teaching material; (4) develop and implement policies for the safety and security of our youth; (5) plan and conduct special projects, such as camps and retreats; and (6) coordinate youth outreach and mission trips.
- **Treasurer** – The Treasurer is responsible for properly receiving, dispersing, accounting, and safeguarding church funds within policies established by the church. This person should (1) maintain a healthy and growing spiritual life and lead others to do the same; (2) develop and implement policies and procedures related to receiving, accounting, and dispersing church funds; (3) maintain records of funds received and dispersed; (4) enlist volunteers to receive, count, and deposit money; (5) maintain records of contributions and prepare and distribute contribution statements; (6) reconcile monthly bank statements and correct ledgers as needed; and (7) make regular reports to the church or leadership as directed by church policies.
- **Small Group Coordinator** – The Small Group Coordinator is responsible for organizing the small group ministry for the development and care of disciples, the encouragement of biblical community, and the ministry to the lost. This person should (1) maintain a healthy and growing spiritual life and lead others to do the same; (2) collaborate with church leadership to build and implement a system of small groups; (3) develop and implement procedures that promote attendance and participation in small groups; (4) be familiar with curriculum resources and make recommendations for classes and groups; (5) recruit and develop leadership for future groups; (6) provide accountability and further training for current small group leaders.