



Leadership Teams

Pre-class Preparation:

Akins, *Pioneer Evangelism*, 28-33

Church Planting Handbook, 42-62, 157-170

Maulphers, *Planting Growing Churches*, 119-125, 263-267, 388-389

Moore, *Starting a New Church*, 69-74

Multihousing, 39-40

Ratliff & Cox, 47-54

Reddin, *Planting Churches that Grow*, 113-115

Schaller, *Forty-four Questions for Church Planters*, 42-43

Seven Steps to Planting a Church

Shenk & Stutzman, *Creating Communities*, 56-67

Towns, *Getting a Church Started*, cassette tape # 4, side 2

The second step in planting a new church is in enlisting the leadership team that will generate the core.

- Video – Church planters and the need for a team.

The second step in planting a new church is in enlisting the leadership team that will generate the core. Often this is a team of people who are raised up on the field. Sometimes, but infrequently, it's team of people who move into the area with the church planter. Regardless of where the team comes from, you must have a team. You can't plant a church by yourself.

A church in Texas did a telemarketing campaign to help found a new church plant in the northwest. The church then sent a pastor up a couple of weeks before the first service, after all the phone calling was completed. When the day came for the first service, about 200 people were in attendance. The problem was that the only person there on the field to assimilate and disciple this group of people was

the pastor. There was no core team with which to work. Consequently, the church ceased to exist within just a couple of months.

The lesson is this: you can't just go and put together an instant church, you need to have a core beforehand. Most new church plants use the basic model and its emphasis on a public unveiling of the church. We might call it a launch or a Grand Opening. Twenty or thirty years ago, church planters knocked on doors and won people to faith in Christ. The church would grow from two to four to six, etc. They would go from a chapel stage to a mission state, and then

finally constitute and become a church. In fact, the model is still very effective in many communities. But one of the shifts in church planting over recent years has been the growth of a group to twenty or thirty people and then having a public service where the church formally gets kicked off. The challenge to doing this is the need for leadership in place before you go public. Watch this church planter's daughter share about what it means to have a team . . .

Video – The church planter is “the big dude” but he needs a team.

So as we said last time, the first step in planting a new church is developing a vision from God for the work. Today we see that the second step in planting a new church is in enlisting the leadership team that will generate the core. And as we've already said, teams tend to do better than individuals. So today, I want us to take a route that involves in a study of helping churches to understand this idea of leadership teams and why we need them. As we go through this second step, we need to ask: why do we need to enlist a leadership team? Christian Schwarz did a study of churches on every continent and he found commonality concerning what makes for . . .

⊕ Healthy Churches¹

- Christian Schwarz' discovered common quality characteristics of growing churches.
 - Of over 1000 churches researched on every continent.
- If these qualities were present to a certain level, the church without exception grew.
 - Qualities were not culture specific but crossed all cultural situations, indicating common char-

acteristics.

- It was not a matter of having just three or four of the characteristics, a church needed to move to having all the quality characteristics at a desired level.
- Schwarz' thesis is that churches grow best when they grow naturally.
- Don't try to grow; concentrate on quality and then the quantity will come.

8 Quality Characteristics²

⊕ Empowering leadership - pastor is relationally oriented.

- These leaders are able to empower others to do ministry in the church.

⊕ Gift-oriented ministry - people use their spiritual gifts.

- Charismatic and non-charismatic churches were studied, so this is not a reference to ecstatic gifts, but to ministry gifts.

⊕ Passionate spirituality - members are on fire for God.

- The people who attended these churches had a passionate spirituality in their lives.

⊕ Functional structures - structure not bound by tradition.

- Structures were flexible and met the needs of the churches as they grew.

⊕ Inspiring worship service - not necessarily seeker-sensitive.

- Some were traditional and some were contemporary.

⊕ Holistic small groups - strongest factor related to growth.

- Included a variety of types of small groups.

⊕ **Need - oriented evangelism - focuses on the needs of the non-Christians.**

- Meeting needs is seen as a venue to reaching people for Christ.

⊕ **Loving Relationships - caring relationships that move beyond church meetings.**

- An abundance of fellowship that goes well below the surface.

Can One Person Provide All Eight Quality Characteristics?

⊕ **Is it likely that the church starter alone can address all of them?
Probably not.**

⊕ **A team approach is much more likely to be successful.**

- Most church planters do not have the luxury of beginning a new work with one of two fully funded staff members as a part of their team.
- Regardless of how the team comes about, the presence of it is critical to the new work.
- Forbes magazine reported that new businesses starting with partners were four times more likely to succeed than those who started with solo entrepreneurs.³
- Before selecting a team, it is critical that the church starter assess the specific role he/she must play in order to fit with the vision of the new church. The right team will help the planter to face the difficulties that come to the new church plant.

Types/Roles of Church Planter⁴

⊕ **The Church Starter/ Initiator.**

- Exercises faith, exhibits hope, and expectation.
- Visioning capacity. Projects into the future. Approaches obstacles as opportunities.
- Committed to church growth.

Leadership Teams

- Personally motivated. Has a desire to do well. Committed to excellence.
- Stays with the job.
- Is responsive to the community.
- Creates ownership of the ministry.
- Utilizes people's gifts.
- Builds cohesiveness.
- Has spouses' cooperation.
- Is flexible/adaptable.

⊕ The Founding Pastor/ Developer.

- Matches the local community.
- Experienced in the pastorate.
- Prepared for the field.
- Willing to do most of the work in the beginning stages.
- Is flexible.
- Has faith and is optimistic.
- Is urgent and progress and patient.
- Is stable enough to stay until results are evident.
- Is enthusiastic about the new church and has a vision for the future.
- Is a strong leader and organizer.
- Is cooperative with the wider fellowship of faith.
- Is a self-starter.
- Is willing to discard ineffective methods and try others.
- Grows personally and professionally.
- Is able to handle criticism and pressure.
- Identifies with the community or group he wants to reach.

- Has a growth attitude.
- A good manager of time and works hard.
- Willing to involve, train, and try lay people as the work grows.
- Preaches and teaches from a biblical base.
- Manages money well.
- Builds good relationships.
- Has a love for God and people.
- Is evangelistic locally.

⊕ The Growth Pastor/Propagator

- Can keep an organization going.
- Leads in membership growth.
- Is an outstanding preacher.
- Relates well to the larger community.
- Understands church financing.
- Enlarges ministries of the church.
- Can manage and supervise a paid staff.
- May lead in building expansion.
- Most church planters and pastors tend to leave before they ever get to this stage in their leadership development. They enjoy the planter/initiator role. And they even like the founding pastor/developer role. But the work that it requires for success in the growth pastor/propagator role is not something about which they get excited. But the fact is that gifts differ. Some are initiators, others are founders, and still others are highly effective at encouraging continuing growth. And yet the church planter needs to try and develop the qualities of all three of these roles into his ministry team. But we need to be careful not to forget God's supreme role in the process. Paul said, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth" (1 Cor. 3:6). To be successful, all the quality characteristics must be covered in the new church plant. Assess yourself, before you form a team and ask: what kind of church starter role fits your gifts? You are going to have to act as a coach raising up people to com-

plete specific tasks on your team. The pastor has the role of helping people to find their place in the service of ministry.

Video—the pastor is a coach, a coach needs a team.

Selecting Team Members by Role

⊕ **A composite list of the various roles for the church starting team would include the following:**

- The selection of the church starting team will rest solidly on the needed roles foreseen by the church starter.
- The church starting team must include, therefore, persons, with the gifts, interests, and skills to address the necessary roles in the church start and complement both the role and gifts of the church starter.
- These persons will be selected and assembled with attention to how the gifts of each can relate to and supplement the gifts of the church starter and other team members.

- **Leader.**
 - The point person in the church starting endeavor.

- **Manager, administrator.**
 - A person who is gifted at organizing and implementing.

- **Teacher.**
 - A person who leads the discipling efforts of the new congregation.

- **Youth worker.**
 - A person who leads the ministry to the youth and their families.

- **Pastor.**

- A person who shepherds the new congregation.

- **Worship leader, facilitator, programmer, music specialist.**

- A person who utilizes all the available resources to maximize the worship experience of the new congregation.

- **Recruiter, evangelist.**

- A person whose entire focus is to lead in outreach efforts.

- **Children's ministry leader-recruiter.**

- A person who establishes and directs the children's ministry of the new congregation.

- **Cell group organizer.**

- A person who enlists, trains, deploys and enables cell group leaders.

- **Business administrator.**

- A person who manages the finances of the new congregation.

- **Pastoral care.**

- A person who organizes and maintains the pastoral care of the members.

⊕ Steps in Selecting the Team

- Many of the roles overlap, and it may be felt that certain roles are less immediate than others.
- Select the planting team of at least six committed people before the church goes public.

- **Suggested Team:**

- **Pastor.**

- Personable/charismatic leader (If the pastor is not a strong administrator, the team also needs an administrator)

- **Worship Leader.**

- With talent. It is well worth it to wait on someone with talent and anointing rather than someone bad trying to fill this position. Many churches begin by using a computer or midi-keyboard to play computer generated worship songs with which the congregation sings.⁵

- **Pre-school / Children's Minister.**

- Unpaid volunteer coordinator. A pre-school class is an area of immediate development. It isn't essential to start a complete children's ministry right away, but these younger children and infants need a classroom and a nursery of their own.

- **Assimilation Coach.**

- (small groups/base coach)
 - Unpaid coordinator of assimilation process and small groups. Help people through classes or encouraging and guiding people to join small groups.

- **Program Leader.**

- Coordinates other programs (ushers/greeters). On the first day of the church's public ministry, these people need to be in place, with an understanding of how important it is to make those who come to feel welcome.

- **Financial Organizer.**

- Unpaid person who oversees finances (including deputation).

- **Determine the Gifts of Team Members.**

- **Determine the Needs of the Target Group.**

- **Determine the Roles of Team Members.**
 - This is a process that is going to take much time and prayer. Pray for God to raise up these needed leaders. The church planter cannot do all of these things on his own. There are some resources that will help in this process...

If you don't bring a team with you for the new church plant, how do you put together the team? Plan ahead to insure that the believers on your team share your vision and your values. If they do, you can then train them to become leaders. More often than not, you'll be reaching people from the harvest. They come to Christ under your ministry and then you train them to become leaders in the course of the discipleship process. The following resources can help:

General: *MasterLife*, L.I.F.E. Classes (101-401)

Cell Groups: Ralph Neighbor, *Shepherd's Guidebook*; Bill Donahue, *Leading Life-Changing Small Groups*

Worship Leader: Bob Sorge, *Exploring Worship*

Assimilation: Gary McIntosh, *Finding Them, Keeping Them*

Children's Resources: *Any Time, Any Where Bible Study Book*

Avoid using dated teaching materials in the beginning. (The size of the groups will be up and down in the beginning and there is no need to spend money needlessly.)

It is not enough to provide books and training for the new team members. If they don't possess the discipline and godliness required to lead in these areas, they will not succeed. As a

church planter, you must take care to appoint people to the leadership team who are committed to their own consistent spiritual growth and discipleship before the Lord.

Are they growing?

Are they living the life?

This doesn't mean that they are perfect; it takes time for new Christians to bring all of the areas of their lives in line with God's ideal (it takes a lifetime).

Are they heading in the right direction and making substantial progress?

Walking with Christ is more important than their depth of knowledge or experience.

Consider taking them to training opportunities.

Take time to personally work one-on-one with them in a deeper discipleship program.

They need to be more than cell group experts. They need to be living the Christian life.

Team Pointers

⊕ How big should the team be?⁶

- **A larger launch team insures the likelihood of success.**
 - If you can take forty or fifty people into your initial core group, they bring so many strengths with them that enable the new church plant to be successful.

⊕ When should you launch?

- **Core preparation should last from three to four months.**
 - There are a number of good reasons to wait. The best reason is that people are more likely to come to the first service of the new church than at any other time.
 - The first service needs to be a high quality service.
 - A large group of new people coming together for the first time provides a sense of comfort because everyone is brand-new.
 - Waiting is a value that needs to be instilled in the minds of the people.
 - (But don't wait too long!) If it takes two or three years to build a core group of twenty to thirty people, you don't need to wait that long to launch. You will lose your forward momentum.
 - Core preparation should last from three to nine months.

⊕ The Crowd to Core Ratio.

- **You need a 10-1 crowd to core ratio.**
 - If you want 200 people at your first service, you'll have a hard time assimilating and minister-

ing to those people with any less than twenty in your core.

- One of the biggest problems in the beginning of the church is that everyone is unfriendly. And that's because everyone is a visitor. So in a crowd of 200 people, it is hard for a core of 20 people to meet everyone.
- You must have enough people to meet the needs of the congregation as it comes in.

⊕ The dangers of the world in the church.

- **The world can overcome the church. The core needs to be ready to assimilate them into the new congregation.**
 - For the first few months, there will probably be more lost people than Christians in your church. Be careful!
 - In the beginning, it will be important for the pastor to preach services that touch points of contact and share the gospel at the same time.
 - This is a time for evangelism.
 - Be careful during this time when you want to keep the crowd that you don't compromise or soften the message of the cross.

⊕ Assimilation takes time.

- **New people want to take their time and check things out before they commit.**
 - Don't be shocked if after the launch people are not falling over each other to get involved in your small groups or other opportunities for fellowship and participation.
 - Research indicates that across North America, church planters report that it takes time for new people to get involved in these areas.
 - Post moderns may change this. Their tendency is to immediately dialogue and investigate.
 - Some innovative churches are actually using small group break-out times immediately following the worship service to talk about what was discussed in the sermon and how it applies to their lives.
 - Assimilation to small groups is a slow process; the core needs to be ready for this reality.

- The weekly worship time is likely to have very fluid attendance. These are not Christians, and to them, coming to church once a month is a big commitment. It takes time for them to understand the value of sitting under the preaching of God's Word and gathering for worship on a regular basis.
- Assimilation takes time! Be careful, and build the right team.

⊕ **Make sure the wrong people get off the team.**

- **Competing visions will arise if the wrong people are on your team.**
 - Don't be afraid to ask if team members are 100% on board for what God has in store.
 - During dry spells, people who are not 100% committed to the vision of the church will come forward with their own "solutions." Competing visions will begin to arise if the wrong people are on the team.
 - During these times, you will need to stand your ground according to the vision God has given you. But it is MUCH easier to handle these potential conflicts on the front-end of the church plant. Otherwise, these people will surface at the most difficult times of the church plant.
 - Be loving, be gracious, and humble as you talk to them. But talk to them! People need to be committed to the dream if they want to stay.

The right team members are an incredible blessing.

And the right team will assist you in building the right church.

- Video: Church planter recommends the need for a team rather than going it alone.

