

# Planting the Church

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**Planting a Church will probably be one of the most challenging, yet rewarding ministry assignments you'll ever take on. You will find as you begin this journey great benefit in having a coach to walk with you. Both you and your coach will map out the journey, using this Coaching Guide and the 'Planting the Church' Storyboard which are designed to give a guided overview of the pathway to planting.**



With this basic overview for church planting in hand and a coach to help in discovering the right questions to start asking, you'll find you're better prepared for the challenge that lies ahead. Because no two churches are exactly alike, this material is principle-specific and uses a model-neutral process that has been developed with the underlying foundation of the vision and values of our movement. It provides you with a safe, stable framework while allowing flexibility within that framework to determine your personal journey in God.

Let's take outreach as an example of this process. Developing a vision for reaching a rural community will look quite different from planning for an inner city outreach or working in a regional centre. The principles remain the same but the outworking will vary from place to place. You will need to ask...What approaches will best reach your community? What giftings will you need on your team? How will you begin the process?

Again, the importance of coaching in this process cannot be underestimated. There is no substitute for having supportive people walking alongside you on your journey.

\*All scripture passages are NKJV (New King James Version) unless otherwise noted

## ▼ Birth of a Vision

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### Key Questions:

- How is God leading you to develop a vision for church planting?
- Write out, in a series of bullet points, the immediate action steps you need to implement in order to develop your vision.
- In a few sentences, what is your vision?

### Cultivate a heart for God

Ministry flows out of a life with God. A vibrant relationship with God sustains you in the challenges of church planting. We hear from God better and see what He wants when we are connected to Him. Our ministry is more fruitful when our intimacy with God encompasses a passion for the harvest, the ability to listen to God, and an understanding of how God has transformed our life. Intimacy with Christ is the sole source of vision, and the character of the leader determines the credibility of the vision.

- What steps can you take to cultivate your heart for ministry?
- What insecurities, fears or sins do you need to bring to God before planting a church?
- What are your motivations for planting a church?

### Clarify God's calling

Your ministry calling is the specific contribution to the kingdom that the Lord wants you to make at this time. Your contribution will take into account your gifts, personality, life situation, and passions. It will also be shaped significantly by your personal biblical understanding and theology—what you really believe about God, life, people, and what's truly important.

- What are the core biblical/theological principles that govern your vision?
- What is the gospel?
- What are the steps you've taken to discover your calling?
- Based on your life situation, gifts and passions, what is the calling that God has placed on your heart?
- What are you doing now to live out your calling?

### Mobilise people to pray with and for you

The first step in birthing a church is birthing prayer. Birth prayer out of prayer. A prayer team that will stick with you is a crucial part of raising up a body of believers. Make a list of any people who have said they will pray for you and establish mutual commitments with those people. What are you asking them to do? Set up a two-way flow of communication and create a covenant with these prayer partners.

- In what ways will you make prayer a high priority in your church plant?
- Who are the people who will pray consistently on your behalf?
- What communication commitments will you make with those who pray for you?
- What are the first things your prayer team can pray for?
- What longer-term key issues do you want your prayer team to focus on?

## **Begin the journey with a vision and expectation of multiplication**

Where are you going? This is a question to ask yourself as a church planter, and this question is answered by vision. Vision is the preferred future God wants to create through you. It is the mental picture you carry in your mind of the future. Start micro and think macro: picture the end result of your ministry and imagine it multiplying across generations as well as your neighbourhood, your city and beyond.

### ***A godly vision:***

- If God really had his way, what is the ultimate vision you would have?
- In what ways does this vision encourage and/or challenge your faith?
- In what ways does this vision motivate other people into action?
- How does your vision glorify God?

## **Develop and communicate your vision to others**

Share the vision with others, but before you nail down your vision and set it in stone, check with others to confirm its authenticity, relevance, and Christ-centredness. You'll need the encouragement if you have a big enough vision.

Refine the vision with others. Dialogue with friends, relatives and others in ministry who can help you edit the vision and simplify it. If the vision is all yours, and nobody else shares it, you'll have a hard time planting a church. With others around you, sharing and contributing to the same convictions, you'll have your first ministry team.

- What feedback have you received from others about your vision?
- How has your vision been sharpened through dialogue with others?
- In what ways have others taken ownership of the vision?



## ▼ Mobilise the Team

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### Key Questions:

- Describe the initial leadership team you envision.
- What are the needed roles and responsibilities of your initial leadership team?
- Write out the action steps you need to take to develop your initial leadership team

### Determine key roles needed

Before recruiting leaders, it is important to ask yourself the question, "Who am I?" God has created you with specific strengths in order to build His kingdom. Select a leadership team that complements your giftedness - not one that duplicates it. Based on who you are, develop a personalised list of needs.

- Who have you served with effectively in the past? Why was it effective?
- What strengths are needed on your leadership team now?
- What specific roles will enhance your team's functionality?
- Who might fit the roles needed for your team?

### Identify potential core leaders

Identifying core leaders with the right qualities is critical, as they'll play a significant role in setting the tone for your new church. What qualities do you need to look for? Good core leaders don't necessarily need experience, but they do need to demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. Start with prayer, and consider the process you'll use to determine who God would have join you.

- What are the qualities you seek in a core leader?
- What is the process you'll use for selecting your core leaders?
- How can you ensure that your core leaders will be loyal to the values, vision and mission?

*Look for people who:*

- *Can reproduce themselves*
- *Have a proven ability to empower others*
- *Have a good relational and spiritual track record*
- *Resonate with your core values, vision and mission*

### Ensure ownership of the vision

For others to take ownership of the ministry, they must embrace the vision. If you present the people around you with YOUR dreams, it'll be a hard sell. But if a group of people can join together and share a dream, along with the steps for reaching it, you'll have launched a ministry team.

Commitment is evidenced by behaviour. Look at how people spend their time and money. As you unpack the vision, help people see what it looks like behaviourally by modelling it yourself and describing for others the boundaries of their actions.

People are committed to what they help develop. Involving them in the visioning process increases their ownership.

Try this exercise: Gather your team around a table and hand out post-it notes. Have each person write down words on the post-it notes that paint a picture of how the vision of the church plant could be outworked. After this is done, put all the thoughts on a white board, and arrange the notes into groups. You'll see the connections, and this visual can refine and sharpen your vision.

- How can you mobilise your team to dream big while thinking practically?
- What if your team's values do not match your own? How will you respond?
- Who are the people around you who share your values and vision?

### Identify and confirm giftedness and responsibilities

All Christians are gifted, and Christian leaders are responsible for helping believers find, develop and outwork their gifts accordingly. Moreover, when people use their gifts, they become more effective and fulfilled. During the church planting process, gift placement can bring more effectiveness to your leadership team.

- How are you exercising your own gifts?
- How will you help people discover their giftedness?
- How will you connect people's gifts with ministry opportunities?

*Gifts are confirmed through:*

- *Joy: What ministry activities bring the most satisfaction and fulfillment?*
- *Insight: Do you spot special needs and/or problems in some situations that other believers often overlook? In what ways?*
- *Results: Where have you been particularly effective? What ministry activities are easy for you to do?*
- *Confirmation: How have others in the body affirmed and/or encouraged you?*

### Motivate people for mission

Mission answers the question, "How will you get there?" It is the specific "who, what and how" of achieving the vision. It defines and details your intended strategy.

- What is the mission you and your leadership team is committed to, succinctly defined?
- In what ways are you motivating your leadership team for this mission?
- How is the leadership team motivating you for the mission?

*Your mission identifies:*

- *The ministry focus group that your team can minister to*
- *Specific needs you are uniquely qualified to meet*
- *How you will meet those needs*

## ▼ Spiritual and Relational Health

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### **Key Questions:**

- How would you assess your overall spiritual health? What indicators are you using to evaluate that?
- How would you assess your relational health? What indicators are you using to do that?
- If you had an hour with a recognised spiritual leader to talk freely and openly about your spirituality, what might God bring to the surface?

### **Maintain a healthy devotional life**

We all need to find ways to be proactive in our relationship with God—and those ways need to be ones that work for us. Don't be afraid to think outside the box and get creative.

Think of as many different ways as possible to engage with God and list them.

- Which of these options do you think might work best for you personally?
- Which can be done with others and which are best done alone?
- Try some new options this week.

### **Develop and maintain a balanced personal life**

Just as people need a healthy balance of rest and exercise to be physically healthy, we also need a healthy balance in how we spend our time in order to be mentally and spiritually healthy. That doesn't necessarily mean spending equal amounts of time everywhere, but spending our time in a way that reflects our values.

For one week, keep a tally sheet and mark one box for each hour you spend in each of the following areas over the course of that week: God, alone, social, work, exercise, relaxation, ministry.

- What does the tally total at the end of the week tell you?

### **Protect the health of your marriage**

As you become increasingly passionate about planting a church, you also need to protect the passion in your marriage relationship. It's a very lonely journey if your partner becomes alienated from you and your ministry. Regular time set aside to communicate with one another on an intimate level is a necessity not an option. Having fun and relaxing together can bring lightness and relief even in very difficult periods.

- How do you presently keep your relationship fresh and vibrant?
- How will you prioritise time for relationship-building as your workload increases?
- What areas of your marriage do you need to put more time and effort into? How will you accomplish this?
- Ask your partner what areas she/he would like to work on.

## Prioritise time with family and friends

Who do you spend your time with? Most church planters feel relationally stretched and it can be easy to begin taking much-needed time away from areas that feel stable - often relationships with family and friends. But when we reduce the time spent, those relationships begin to feel less and less stable. Planting a church to the detriment of your family or friends is a dangerous undertaking. It will collapse eventually—guaranteed.

- Who are your friends? When do you see them?
- What boundaries have you established regarding workload and its impact on family life?
- How would you assess your current relationship with your family and friends?
- How would your spouse, children, friends assess their relationship with you?

## Seek out and establish healthy accountability

We all need two kinds of people in our lives: truth-tellers and grace-givers. Truth-tellers are people who are not afraid to get in our face and call our bluff. Who are the truth-tellers in your life? Who will be unafraid to stand up to you and tell you things you don't necessarily want to hear? Grace-givers are those who don't ignore sin, but show mercy and grace in the face of it. They remind us of Christ's sacrifice for us. We need both kinds of people. And even more, we need people who are both grace-givers and truth-tellers—for these aren't opposite, but complementary.

*Make a list of all the truth-tellers in your life:*

- *How could you invite them to hold you accountable? What would be the most natural way to do that?*
- *Who are the grace-givers in your life? How could they best support you through the journey ahead?*



## ▼ The Launch Strategy

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### **Key Questions:**

- What are the areas your church plant must address before a launch?
- Outline your strategy for starting and multiplying churches.

### **Work on and identify your key ministry values**

Values are deeply held convictions and assumptions that influence our attitudes and behaviours. It is important as leaders, that we clarify our ministry values so we understand our reactions and responses. It's also important we do this so we can help others to do the same.

Try this exercise: Gather your team around a table and hand out post-it notes. Have each person write down on the post-it notes the values they think are important for the church. After this is done, put all the thoughts on a white board, and arrange the notes into groups. You'll see the connections, and this visual will give you the basis of a set of shared values.

- What things are really important to you in ministry?
- What kinds of formal ministry values assessment have you participated in?
- How will you develop a set of values for the new church?
- How will you gain shared values from your team?

### **Develop a launch strategy**

Starting a church that grows requires a systemic approach which prepares for healthy birth. Make sure that you fully address each area before launching public worship services.

- Is the launch strategy so clear that, if the planter died, someone else could pick up the plans and know exactly what to do?
- Are adequate resources mobilised to accomplish the launch?

### **A launch timeline:**

A timeline is an actual picture of events that you want to see happen in the future. For the launch of a church plant you want to use a timeline that accurately shows the "big picture" as well as the 'detail'. Work with your team to develop this timeline so everyone knows what is happening and the part they play in the launch.

- Does the timeline follow a logical sequence? What have you done to make sure it does?
- How realistic is the schedule?
- What have you done to ensure you have an adequate number of people to outwork the launch strategy?
- How will you ensure you have sufficient resources?
- How do you identify any serious gaps in the timeline?

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**A launch budget:**

If the Lord has led you to a clear vision with a workable strategy, He will also lead you to discover the financial resources for accomplishment of the plant. That doesn't mean you don't have a part to play. Working on the initial start-up needs, determining an ongoing budget and using the resources effectively are part of the launch strategy.

- How are you bringing your specific financial needs before God?
- Where are the start-up funds coming from?
- What do you plan to use the start-up funds for?
- How long will it be before the church is self sufficient?
- Who will you get to help you develop a budget?

**Why people give:**

- Recognise that Christians need to give even more than we need to receive
- People give because they have a relationship with a planter/church
- People give because they believe in the cause. They want to invest in ministry. Every ministry needs a well-defined statement of why it exists
- People give because of the content of the communication
- People give because of the method of the communication. The more personal it is, the more successful it will be.

**Initial goals:**

Goals for a start-up include all of the sections that come later in this Coaching Guide: groups, leadership development, worship, multiplication, etc. You'll need to pre-think the rest of your church plant in order to plan well for start-up. While doing this type of long-range planning, be sure to stay on the path of your vision by looking ahead toward clearly established goals. It's easy to get sidetracked from the vision when you're growing, which is why having a clear plan is important. Translate vision into action by creating milestones for progress.

- What goals do you need to put in place to fulfill the vision?
- What are the immediate steps you can take to meet your goals?
- What are the milestones along the way toward accomplishing your goals?

**Establish appropriate ministry systems**

Ministry systems help ordinary people do extraordinary things. Effective systems will include flow charts, job descriptions and checklists and are designed to maintain continuity even when personnel change.

- What are the essential ministry systems for your church?
- Which one(s) are functioning? Which one(s) are ready to be implemented?
- What systems are missing? What are your action plans?
- Can you draw your ministry flow chart? Show how people move through the process of increasing involvement.

## ▼ Understand your Community

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### Key Questions:

- What are the action steps you'll need to take to better understand your community?
- Describe the community you plan to reach.
- What adaptations do you need to make to reach the people in your community?

### Survey your community

At times it may be valid to do things like a mini-survey using pre-prepared questions with a sample group from your community. However much can be learned by simply engaging with people informally in the park, at the supermarket, in local businesses, in restaurants and clubs. By engaging with a variety of people at every opportunity, you will learn much about common values, community events, perceived needs, aspirations and disappointments. As you walk and talk in the community, you will begin to feel the pulse of the area.

- What have you learned from interactions with people in your target community?
- Choose as many words as possible to describe your community experience so far
- What was a key insight you gained from observation and engagement in the community?

### Understand the unique demographic issues of your community

As you research the demographics of your target area, imagine you are crossing into another culture. Even if it doesn't seem like it, think of it as if you are. Those are the same principles you'll need to research the culture you're trying to reach and bridge the cultural gaps.

Some areas to research and consider include age distribution, household incomes, educational levels, marital status, and ethnic groupings. All of these will make a difference in some of the ways you approach ministering to people. Plan to invest at least 15-20 hours to complete your demographic study.

- What are the results of your research?
- What implications for church planting flow out of your demographic research?
- What sub-groups do you see as potentially reachable through new groups and/or churches?

### Identify potential opportunities to engage with your community

Every community has its own unique history, values and ways of working. There are always people who are more receptive and open to change. They may be facing relational, vocational or financial challenges. Ask yourself the question, 'What is *Good News* for this community or for a particular sub-group within the community'. A church planter in one part of Melbourne tells people that "through Jesus Christ they can realise their full potential, and they don't have to fit into anybody else's mould." In a predominantly traditional European culture, that's great news!

Remember the message of Christ. Jesus said, "I have not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance." (Luke 5:32). Remember that receptive people might not be the first group you think of.

- Who are the possible receptive people in your community?
- How do you plan to engage with and serve these people?
- What are some ways you plan to seek out more of these receptive people?"
- What are the needs of your community?
- What is the good news for your target group?

### **Identify and maximise potential relational networks**

Out of your formal and informal research you will now have a good idea of what brings people together. What are the common reasons people gather in this community? These can be age-related, linked to ethnicity, show a recreational need or reflect a religious affiliation. Linking into these relational networks has the potential for greater success in connecting people to Jesus. A church planter in Western Australia loved surfing and connected with a local group of surfers. He befriended the perceived leader of the group and led him to Jesus. That new disciple then started leading others to Jesus.

- Where and how do people gather and interact relationally?
- In what ways can you seek to understand the people in these groups?
- How do you make inroads into these established groups?
- How do you see your team making inroads into these established groups?
- How can you find new networks to explore?
- If your church plant is cross-cultural, who is bi-cultural and can help you?



## ▼ Connecting with your community

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### Key Questions:

- How do you plan to pray for non-believers?
- What steps can you take to cultivate redemptive relationships?
- In what ways will non-believers hear the message of the kingdom of God?
- In a series of bullet points, write out the immediate action steps you'll take to serve and reach non-believers.

### Engage your community in meaningful ways

When you have a clearer understanding of your community, you will gain an insight into their needs, what they value, and what's important to them. Given this information, how can you best engage with them? Brainstorm options with your team. Don't feel the need to make immediate connections to spirituality - although it will certainly be connected in your mind from the outset - but just serve freely out of a desire to help people no matter what their response to Jesus may eventually be.

- What are some creative ways you can serve people around you?
- How can you lead others - believers or not - to serve alongside you?
- What are your motivations for serving?

### Establish ongoing prayer over all activities

The first step in birthing a church is birthing prayer. Prayer should become as natural as breathing. Every ministry should be bathed in prayer. As you begin the process of reaching out into the community start with prayer. Prayer walks with and for non-believers are a great way to start this process. See the community through God's eyes, and plan your activities accordingly. Ask God for discernment and to pour out His blessing on the people you see.

- How will you pray for non-believers?
- What is God showing you about your community through prayer?

### Cultivate redemptive relationships

The early church grew so rapidly because the Christians eagerly and naturally shared the gospel with the people they knew. Among our natural network of relationships, there exists a pre-established commonality of love, trust, respect and interests. That's why these natural relationships provide the most effective avenues for evangelism. In a redemptive relationship, it's important to ask yourself how you can serve the other person and develop a genuine friendship. Remember not to force a spiritual agenda, but rather to wait until people are ready.

Draw a diagram, or write a description, of the natural connections around you. How will you expand these connections?

- How can you lead people to develop more meaningful relationships?
- What steps can you take to develop genuine friendships with a spiritual purpose?
- How can you deepen the relationships in your church plant?

## **Maximise connections with people of influence in your community**

In order to accelerate growth in the early days of a church plant when numbers are small, consider ways to increase the number of potentially fruitful relationships. Be creative in these efforts. When God is at work in a harvest field, there are often "people of influence" who are catalysts to spark transformation within a whole group of people. These people are relationally connected to a large group of people, and have a strong reputation (either good or bad). The multiplication potential that comes through reaching these people is enormous. Through their influence, the gospel can spread more rapidly.

- Who are some "people of influence" in your community?
- How can you best reach these people?
- How can these "people of influence" help you reach their networks?
- What are some creative ideas that you can implement to harvest new relationships?



## ▼ Equip and multiply disciples

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### **Key Questions:**

- How do you plan to model the life of a disciple?
- What reproducible methods will you put in place to raise up disciples?
- Describe how you plan to train and multiply disciples.
- In a series of bullet points, write out the immediate action steps you'll take to train and multiply disciples.

### **Facilitate healthy spiritual growth**

How you treat Christians within the first 24-48 hours after their conversion is crucial. Here are some suggestions:

- Give them the opportunity to publicly share their new found faith as soon as possible. In some circumstances this may mean water baptism.
- Start discipling new believers right away.
- On most occasions, let new believers pray first, rather than you taking the lead.

Imprint God as the parent. In the field of Ornithology (the science of birds) there is a term called "imprinting." A newborn gosling hatching from an egg will imprint on the first moving object it sees and will then follow it for food, protection, and training to become a goose. When new Christians are born again, it is important that they "imprint" upon Jesus for protection, sustenance, and training in how to fly.

- What will you do with new believers soon after their rebirth?
- In what specific ways can you help new believers to see God as the parent?
- How will others recognise that new disciples are breathing spiritually?

### **Mobilise for ministry participation**

You can best mobilise new disciples for ministry participation by starting right where they already are. Ministry doesn't start after a lengthy training process. A new disciple is already qualified to be a witness. Ministry starts now... wherever the disciple already is.

- How can you help new disciples share their spiritual experiences with their family, friends, and associates?
- What scriptural examples can you think of where new disciples began participating in ministry right away?
- What's the fewest number of things a new disciple needs to know in order to share the gospel?
- How can you involve new disciples in serving others?

## Encourage meaningful connections with the un-churched

As you develop new disciples, it is important to connect them with the Christian community. This needs to be achieved without disconnecting them from non-believers because new disciples have the greatest impact on those outside the Kingdom. Their 'born-again' story is fresh and vital and those around them clearly see the change.

Encourage them not only to maintain the relationships they have but also to build new relationships. This may be done naturally in their everyday environment or through church activities designed to reach out into the wider community. View these new believers as frontline workers and provide ongoing modelling and support for them.

- How do you adjust your view of ministry to free-up new disciples to connect meaningfully with non-believers?
- How will you provide support for them so they are not drawn back to a pre-Christian lifestyle?
- What activities might provide an avenue for new disciples to connect with non-believers?

## Establish a discipleship and multiplication DNA

Life Transformation Groups are a great way to infuse spiritual DNA within your church. These groups are a simple way to release the most essential elements of a vital spiritual walk to people who need Jesus to change their lives from the inside out. They are a grass roots tool for growth, encouraging and supporting people to follow Christ.

Life Transformation Groups meet once a week for approximately an hour, are groups of two or three (the addition of a fourth person is the beginning of the second group and multiplication is imminent) are not co-ed, but gender specific, with no curriculum, workbook or training. There is no leader needed. Only three tasks are accomplished:

- 1) Sin is confessed in mutual accountability,
- 2) Scripture is read repetitively in context and in community,
- 3) People are prayed for strategically, specifically and continuously.

- What other methods have you previously utilised to reproduce disciples?
- How can you encourage people to form Life Transformation Groups?
- Who are some people that you might ask to join a Life Transformation Group?



## Model “how to” training

Follow Jesus' model of training, by showing leaders how to do it, helping them do it, then sending them out. Hands-on experience through on-the-job training is one of the best ways to learn. Holistic mentoring and coaching is training the whole person to be like Christ through character growth (being), cognitive development (knowing), and skill acquisition (doing).

### Jesus' model of training

I do – you watch  
I do – you help  
You do – I help  
You do – I watch  
You do – someone else watches

As you begin to design your training systems, keep them simple and reproducible.

- Describe how you will utilise Jesus' training method in your ministry.
- How will you provide ongoing training and resourcing for your leaders?
- How do you plan to evaluate your training effectiveness?

### Provide consistent coaching

Coaching is the process of coming alongside a person or team to help them discover God's agenda for their life and ministry, and then cooperating with the Holy Spirit to see that agenda become a reality. By training qualified coaches, you can provide the continued care for a leader that is critical to the ongoing life of your church. Every level of leadership needs someone to turn to for support and encouragement.

Coaching leaders can be outworked both one-on-one and also in small groups. When in small groups leaders learn from each other as they work together to negotiate challenges and they learn how to coach from watching you coach others.

- How will you adjust your schedule to prioritise consistent coaching?
- What are the steps you'll take to improve your coaching?
- How will you identify and mobilise apprentice coaches?
- What will you do to ensure all leaders are in a coaching relationship?



## ▼ DNA of Multiplication

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### Key Questions:

- How will new disciples be connected with small groups?
- Describe the expected ministry flow of your groups.
- In a series of bullet points, write out the immediate action steps you'll take to start and multiply small groups.

### Establish your small group model

For healthy growth your church needs a holistic small group system in place. This system will look different depending on the type of church you start, but people need some form of interaction with a smaller group of people. Start by defining your core values. Examples of core values in group life might include prayer, community, growth, creativity, evangelism, and multiplication.

- What types of groups do you plan to have in your church (i.e. disciple-making, recovery, prayer, accountability, topical, etc.)?
- How will you structure your group ministry?
- By God's grace, what will your small group ministry look like in five years?

### Determine the steps to multiplying groups

Like the human body, there are whole systems that need to be considered for a healthy, functional church. A general ministry flowchart helps you clarify your model of ministry and visualise how people will enter into and become a part of your church.

The ministry flowchart for the small group ministry will show how people enter into groups, how they are cared for, how they participate in the development and reproduction of the group and how the small group connects in with the ministry of the wider church. As part of that process you will need to develop a clear multiplication pathway for existing and new leaders to follow.

- What are the pathways and processes for people to become connected into a small group?
- How do you help people in small groups to own the idea that multiplication is part of every healthy small group?
- What do you need to do to develop a simple reproducible process for multiplying small groups?



## Start pilot small groups

A church is usually birthed when the first groups emerge with people who have been invited through contact with the church planter and the initial leadership team. Like a baby, these groups have a lot of growing and changing to do. What they do might not exactly look like what an adult group will look like, but they will share the same basic elements. When the pilot groups are functioning properly, you can then replicate them. This same principle applies to the birth, growth and multiplication of all small groups into the future.

- Who can you ask to help you birth a pilot group?
- What is your strategy for inviting participants to your small group?
- In what ways do you plan to build relationships in your group?
- What is your plan for training leaders?

## Multiply groups continually

Before multiplying the pilot groups, ensure that the proper elements are in place. You'll want to decide to what extent you want to see certain essentials functioning in other groups. Through apprenticing, coaching and in-service training, you'll develop a group of leaders who can go on to multiply other groups.

It is crucial to take your group through a clear, reproducible process:

- How can you develop a healthy process for groups to multiply?
- How will you know when it's time for a group to multiply? Set clear expectations.
- What are some ways that you can transition groups during multiplication?
- What are the ways you plan to train leaders to multiply their groups?

*Steps for preparing your group for multiplication:*

- *Have leaders share their sense of urgency for multiplication with the small group and ask the group to be in prayer.*
- *Give time for members to voice reservations and excitement about the prospect of multiplication.*
- *For several weeks, following a joint worship time, divide into two groups for discussion/sharing/prayer with the apprentice leader giving direction to one group.*

## Train, resource and nurture small group leaders

Provide support and encouragement to your small group leaders. Coach people in the direction of effective resources that will be the most useful for reaching their goals. Some avenues for resourcing include coaching, leadership community, and training events.

- How will you provide quality coaching for your leaders?
- How will you train and resource your leaders?

## ▼ My Church

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### Key Questions:

- What is worship?
- How can you foster an environment where worship is expressed in a variety of ways?
- How will creativity in worship be released?
- Describe your plan for worship.
- In a series of bullet points, write out the immediate action steps you'll take to develop inspiring worship services.

### Clarify your approach to worship services

As you work on clarifying your approach to worship services it's important to think through what you're trying to accomplish in worship. Perhaps you want to foster a mood of celebration. Perhaps you want to create an environment where it's safe to respond to God's leading. Perhaps you want to incorporate others' giftedness. How does your plan invite the work of the Holy Spirit?

- What are you trying to accomplish in worship?
- What are the elements you plan to incorporate and prioritise in your worship (e.g. singing, art, dance, etc.)?
- Write down your ideas on corporate worship. Answer these questions: How often is your church planning to gather? What are your philosophies regarding the sacraments? What are the dynamics involved in worship?

### Creating an environment for authentic worship

Church services aren't meant to be sombre, boring events. Neither are they meant to be side-shows. Worship is not about music or drama or preaching, it is about glorifying God and responding to his calling through openness and repentance.

People are all different in the way they respond to God. Some respond to enthusiasm, other respond to silence. Many like music, but some are non-auditory worshippers. Authenticity and awareness of God's full creation is what creates a dynamic worship experience.

- How can you promote authenticity in your worship, taking into consideration your environment?
- What are the strategic questions about your meeting place that you still need to think through?
- What are some elements you can incorporate into your worship so everyone is involved in connecting with God?

### Modelling a lifestyle of personal worship

Worship is not a weekly event. It is a lifestyle. Romans 12:1 says: "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual worship." (RSV)

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Make personal worship a priority in your daily schedule because if your own personal worship lacks depth and significance, you will be unable to lead others into the presence of God. Help your people to grow in personal worship so they are ready for God to work in their lives when the church comes together.

- How do you worship God when your door is shut?
  - What does your personal worship help you to do?
  - What does it mean to 'present your bodies as a living sacrifice'?
- How do others witness your life of worship?

### **Releasing creativity in worship**

Imitating God in creation is a powerful way to worship. Without creativity, the worship becomes routine and predictable. There is a certain value in repetition, but creativity is also important for inspiring people. Think outside the box.

- Who are the creative people who you can better include in your worship?
- Brainstorm several ideas for a larger project that your church could design or implement for worship.
- How can your church create its own culture of worship?

### **Training and resourcing worship leaders**

The worship team plays three important leadership roles:

- Prompting: helping people engage in worship
- Modelling: providing example for others as they worship
- Facilitating: allowing the Holy Spirit to guide the worship experience

Some issues to discuss with your worship leaders include personal preparation, confidence and humility, musical quality, and connection with the message. If worship leaders portray themselves as superstars, the focus is often drawn away from God.

- What is the style of worship that meets your people and mobilises them into action?
- In what way is creativity prioritised in your worship?
- Do the worship team members have a heart for worship and strong abilities in worship? How can they improve their abilities in worship?
- How is authenticity being expressed?



## ▼ Advancing the Kingdom

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### Key Questions:

- How will you know your ministry is kingdom-building?
- What people and/or organisations do you plan to connect with to expand the influence of your ministry?
- In a series of bullet points, write out the immediate action steps you'll need to take to develop and embrace a kingdom focus.

### Identifying and addressing specific social justice issues

True obedience is rooted not only in faith, but in our hearts and our emotions. When we are touched by the world around us, we are moved toward action. When we open ourselves up toward God and others, we are forever changed. By allowing ourselves to care, we ourselves are transformed. Our obedience not only benefits others and brings glory to God, but allows us to experience the heart of God in whole new ways. As James the brother of Jesus so eloquently put it: —What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if people claim to have faith but have no deeds? (James 2:14-19) Let your heart be broken by the things that break the heart of God.

- What opportunities do you see for social justice ministry?
- How can you mobilise people to establish social justice ministries?
- How will you integrate social justice ministries into your church life?

### Networking with existing government agencies and ministries

Linking with others is a great way to immerse yourself within the culture. Perhaps there are organisations within your own community that you can network with, such as a nearby school or social service group. Perhaps there are other churches nearby that you can affiliate with in some way. Connecting your church beyond itself is essential. Explore what associations would be most appropriate for your situation.

- What support could you gain from affiliation with other organisations?
- How can you gain resources from a connection with an existing organisation?
- How can you serve/resource the community and other organisations ?

### Asking God to transform the culture

Transforming a culture doesn't mean making it into your culture; it means bringing the presence of God into that culture to renew it in the way God intends. There is no way you can transform a culture alone; only God can do that. Ask for the kind of transformation that's only possible with the Holy Spirit. "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." (Ephesians 3:20-21).

- Paint a contrasting behavioural picture between what is and what could be, by God's grace.
- How do you see God already at work?
- What is the next step God is asking you to take?

## ▼ Lead, Manage, Grow

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### Key Questions:

- How can you empower leaders and ministries for growth?
- What are your goals for coaching leaders?
- Describe your system for raising up leaders.

### Strengthen the coaching culture

A coaching culture is what empowers your leaders and ministries, and sets your church up for multiplication. No matter what your church's philosophy is, leaders need to be resourced. The best way to do that is through personalised coaching, ensuring that all leaders are coaching and are being coached. Raise up apprentice coaches, and you'll start a multiplying movement of coaches for the kingdom.

- Describe your vision for cultivating a coaching movement.
- How will you train and multiply quality coaches?
- What first steps can you take to create a culture of coaching?

### Continually live and communicate the vision

Even leaders can lose vision in less than 30 days. We all need to be regularly reminded of where we're going and what's really important. Continually evaluate the ways that you're staying on track with pursuing the vision, and continue to communicate it to others through how you spend your time and how you're pursuing the vision.

- How do your personal actions demonstrate your commitment to the vision?
- How are you communicating the vision?
- How are others living out the vision?

### Translate vision into action plans

All leaders have vision to varying degrees. The thing that's lacking is seeing the steps that can take you forward. In every ministry you need to ask yourself, "Where does God want us to go? What are the steps we can take to start moving in that direction?" This is what distinguishes visionaries who merely dream from visionaries who see their dreams become a reality.

Determine a set of milestones that enable you to reach your vision. Milestones are the important objectives to achieve along the way toward fulfilling the vision. Then create a series of actions steps to help you meet those milestones. Chart these steps out over a period of at least 2-3 years.

- What kinds of people do you need around you to facilitate the planning process?
- How can you work with your leaders to translate vision into action?
- What are the milestones you plan to reach within the next year?

## Evaluate for continual improvement

Evaluate and track progress so you can adjust your leadership style as you grow. You need to shift gears as your church grows to avoid stalling. The leadership style that works during one phase of your church's development will not be as effective during the next stage of growth. For example, at first you might lead groups, then, as you raise up leaders, your role needs to transition to be a coach of those who are leading groups. Then you become a coach of coaches.

Create and use a feedback system on a regular basis to help you evaluate and improve:

- What methods will you use for evaluating and refocusing?
- How and when will you celebrate progress?
- How do you anticipate your leadership style adjusting as you grow?

## Continue to share and work towards multiplication at every level of ministry

Multiplication is better than addition. Start with the end in mind, and then reproduce leaders at the lowest levels. Equip them, coach them, mentor them and send them. If multiplication is in your genetic code, the natural result will be the multiplication of leaders.



- How can addition be turned into multiplication at each level in your ministry?
- How will you develop each of the distinct types of leaders listed below?
- Who could coach each type of leader?
- What strategies do you have to multiply leaders?

*Multiplying and equipping these leaders is the key to multiplying movements:*

- *Apostle: sent to lay a foundation for the expansion of the church*
- *Prophet: hears and speaks a specific word from God*
- *Evangelist: called to share the gospel with others and lead them toward acceptance of Christ.*
- *Shepherd: has an overwhelming concern for the continuing care of a specific community.*
- *Teacher: responsible for growth in understanding and application of the truth.*

## ▼ Culture of Multiplication

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### Key Questions:

- What legacy would you like to leave with the church? Dream big.
- What will your church legacy look like in 15 years?
- What steps would you need to take now to see that legacy become a reality?

### Ensure all systems are reproducible

For any of the work you have done to produce a long-term effect, it must be reproducible. Just as the church you've planted needs to be able to function without you, the whole system needs to be able to function without you. Make a list of all the systems in your church (e.g. small groups, worship, leadership development) and describe in one paragraph how each particular system could continue reproducing itself indefinitely.

- Which systems are currently reproducible?
- Which systems are not?
- What steps could you take to make those systems reproducible?

### Monitor reproduction rates

Schedule regular check-in times to assess the rate of reproduction in all areas: disciples, groups, ministries, churches. Set clear goals in advance and see how well your church is meeting these goals. If you're not seeing progress in an area, evaluate why not and brainstorm possible solutions.

- How many new disciples would you like to see developed in the next year?
- How many new groups would you like to see started in the next year?
- How many new ministries would you like to see launched in the next year?
- Who do you need to get on board in order to make these things happen?
- When would be some good check-in times to assess progress toward your goals?

### Multiply disciples, groups, ministries, and churches

Think beyond your own church. Expanding the kingdom isn't done solely through multiplying disciples—or even through multiplying groups. It's done through multiplying churches. New churches can reach new people groups that are beyond where your own church can travel. Don't think too small. God wants to bless you beyond your wildest dreams and bring in a harvest beyond what you can even imagine.

- Who could serve with you as an apprentice church planter?
- When and how will you multiply your church?
- How can you encourage others to multiply their churches?

## Continue raising up new leaders

Nothing is reproducible without new leadership. You'll need to put systems in place to develop these new leaders: training, coaching, and resourcing them. Just as importantly, you'll need to be able to release and sponsor them into their new ministries. This last area can be harder than it sounds, as releasing includes the releasing of decision-making authority.

- Who are the new leaders you are currently developing?
- What are their ministry goals?
- If you develop and then release them what would be accomplished?
- To what degree would you say you trust them to make good decisions on their own?

## Commit to generational multiplication

A group hasn't really multiplied when it becomes two groups. It has really multiplied when the first group has given birth to a second group and the second group has given birth to a third group—to the fifth and sixth generations. The genealogies can become confusing at this point as you try to remember which group was founded in which other group. But even after multiple generations, you can still see some similar DNA between the 6<sup>th</sup> generation and the first generation.

- Where have you seen multiplication to the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> generations?
- Consider your own spiritual history. Who led you to faith? Who led them to faith? Where do the ultimate roots lead you?
- How will you ensure multiplication at every level
- How could these principles be applied to your groups, ministries, and church?



## ▼ Where do you go from here?

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We hope this Coaching Guide will be helpful as you walk the pathway to birthing a new church. At this point, you have only been given an outline of the church planting process, along with coaching questions that can help in your journey.

As you continue in the ministry of church planting, here are some other things you might consider:

- Use the *Planting the Church Storyboard* as a one-page overview of the complete church planting process
- Read books like *Viral Churches* and *Be Fruitful and Multiply* for an expanded vision of what church multiplication movements look like.
- Ensure you continue to be coached as you build your new church from the ground up.

Planting a church will be one of the most challenging, yet rewarding, journeys you'll ever take on. You will need resources like the ones above to help you do this successfully but you will also need people to walk with you on the journey.

***Enjoy the journey!***

## ▼ Notes

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▼ **Notes**

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