

## **Church Planting: What Does A Church Planter Look Like? (Session Three)**

**Introduction:** In our first two sessions on church planting, we have addressed the why of church planting. We discovered that the words of Jesus are as true today as when He spoke them. “ The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.” ( Matthew 9:38) The condition of the world, both in developed and in undeveloped countries or traditional Christian cultures and unreached cultures around the world, is ripe to gather into the Kingdom of God. What is needed are workers, and in our context, this means church planters or those who would be on the church plant team.

We have also addressed the need for the church plant to be missional. Early Church church plants were missional in that they brought the gospel into the context of gentile culture and made disciples. They were not making disciples out of “ recycled saints” but new converts that were coming out of pagan cultures. In order for these churches to fulfill their mission, the Church had to be contextual in their communication and methods of preaching and building churches. We talked about what that looked like, and the need to incarnate into the very culture we are trying to reach and allow the gospel to be reflected in that culture without compromising the gospel or doctrine.

We also addressed the various models used in church planting. We discussed how one size does not meet all needs in reaching cultures and that all these models have proven to be effective under the right leadership. What cannot be compromised are the seven truths that Jesus and the New Testament defines as the foundational essentials of what a church does. Every church builder must teach and implement these essential truths and evaluate what is being built by these essentials.

In this lesson, we are going to talk about the Church Planter and the Church Plant Team member. What kind of person plants a church? What do they look like? What should be their qualifications? How should they be assessed? What should be the preparation process? This is what session three is all about. What does a church planter look like?

- I. The Bible Places A High Premium on Preparation And Assessment. This is an absolute for the church planter candidate.**

“He called down famine on the land and destroyed all their supplies of food; and he sent a man before them— Joseph, sold as a slave. They bruised his feet with shackles, his neck was put in irons, till what he foretold came to pass, till the word of the Lord proved him true.”

Psalms 105:16-19 NIV

**Joseph was called and gifted. He possessed a true prophetic vision of future authority and influence, but God had to develop him, and God did this through suffering and injustice. This severe 13 year season of suffering did two things: 1. It prepared Joseph for what God had called him to do. 2. It proved who Joseph was in his character and gifting ( resisting sin; faith; honor; prophetic dreams; faithfulness in tasks; and in hard work)**

“Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.” 1 Corinthians 4:2 NIV

**Before God gives you anything, your faithfulness to truth, purity, loving God preeminently, loving God’s people...all have to be developed and revealed .**

**This happens in the “ cooker”**

“He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.”

1 Timothy 3:4-6 NIV

**First the natural and then the spiritual, so God develops and reveals you to be true in your natural life..how you treat your wife, children, finances, manage your house...the way you are in your home is the way you are in your church**

““Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true

riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?"

Luke 16:10-12 NIV

**So how you handle smaller responsibilities is how you will handle bigger responsibilities, and how you handle money, is how you will handle spiritual things..how you handle someone else's ministry is how you will handle your own.**

- A. One of the strongest indicators of whether someone should be a church planter or not is this: "How has grace operated in them in their local church?" Just as Paul had grace in his life to reveal Christ to the gentiles, there is a grace already operating in a church planter that can help him determine whether this is something God has called him to do.

**Ex: myself..12-15 kid youth group, Sunday school, taking care of a widow... ran two Christian schools, served on a youth staff as a volunteer for 5 years ( ran the evangelism ministry), became the youth pastor for 9 years, taught in The Bible College, Elder, an Executive pastor, then church planted, 25 years a Lead Pastor, and then Leadership in the larger body of Christ ( my own Global workers and MFI)**

1. Is he an entrepreneur? **Tenacity,passion about what they do,risk takers, visionaries, confident,break the norm**
2. Is he a self-starter? **They push, make things happen**
3. Is he a motivator? **Stir others, "follow me as I am following Jesus"; pull gifts out of them**
4. Can he inspire others to buy into his vision? **Get them to see it**
5. Is his wife with him in this venture? **Ex: daughter of an engineer**
6. Can he communicate? **Understand where he is going**
7. Can he connect people relationally? **Build teams**
8. Can he dream? **Envision the future?**
9. Can he implement the vision? Can he establish the steps to get to the goal? **Dreams without steps of action are " pipe dreams"**
- 10.Can he connect with the unchurched community? **Natural and inspiring with unbelievers**
11. Does he have great faith? **Without faith, it is impossible**

12. Is he resilient when faced with opposition or criticism? In other words, does he know how to endure suffering and difficulties?
13. Does he have a strong sense of his ministry call? **God put me here.. I don't budge**
14. Can he recognize spiritual gifts and delegate responsibilities to other members of the team? **Or is he a micromanager ?**

B. It is important to note that someone can possess a pastoral gift but not be a church planter. Church planting is not just evangelizing or caring for people pastorally or being able to teach the Bible. It involves a very complex skill set, especially to create something out of nothing.

C. This should be tested in the local church by giving the candidate smaller responsibilities where they have the opportunity to use their creative and gathering skills to gather teams and move the department or assigned group forward. In other words, can they produce with a microcosm of what they will face as a church planter. **What they are in the past is a window of what they will be in the future.**

D. There also should be spiritual and character qualities in a church planter that will make him effective as a church planter. These qualities should be developed in them in their tenure of serving a local church.

1. Dependence on God **man of prayer**
2. Discernment of what is false or evil **see down the road where a trend or a doctrine will take you**
3. A genuine care for God's people: a pastoral heart **do you insulate or do you let people touch you?**
4. Can lead people by example and persuasion **a debater, salesmanship**
5. Can teach the Word of God **primary role**
6. Can hear God prophetically **many times in your journey that you will need to hear from God**
7. Can be stubborn when it is needed **lead pastors are fathers and fathers have to be stubborn**

8. Certainty of a call **can't be saying to your team, " maybe God made a mistake"**
9. An instinct of what will and what will not work **A leader= walk into a room and know what to do**

E. How do you assess whether someone should plant a church or not?

1. They should be proven in the local church
  - a. Purifies ( motives)
  - b. Proves ( reveals whether they have the skills)
  - c. Produces ( develops them in skills and brings out their gifting)
  
2. They should have time to discover their life purpose

**Editorial: very few people in their early twenties know who they are and where they are going to land in life. The call of God is not just a burning bush experience. It requires discovery**

- a. Discovery of passions ( **what moves you/ make you angry/ burns inside of you/ draws you**)
  - b. Discovery of past successes ( **the window to your future is your past**)
  - c. Discovery of anointing ( what comes easy)
  - d. Discovery of limits **who you are and what you are not**
  - e. Discovery of values ( **the whys/ things that are important to you/ things you think are important to God**)
  - f. Discovery of a life message ( **everyone of us has a life theme**)
3. They should serve someone else's vision

"After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites." Joshua 1:1-2 NIV

“But Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there no prophet of the Lord here, through whom we may inquire of the Lord?” An officer of the king of Israel answered, “Elisha son of Shaphat is here. He used to pour water on the hands of Elijah.”” 2 Kings 3:11 NIV

“But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel.”

Philippians 2:22 NIV

**Question: how are you known right now?**

**Note:** When I plant a church, my role will be to make the people I serve successful in what God is doing in them. This gets cultivated when I make someone over me successful.

4. They should have the witness of others confirming their call

“The believers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him.”

Acts 16:2 NIV

“So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.” Acts 13:3 NIV

“James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me.”

Galatians 2:9 NIV

5. They should go through some objective assessment

- Church Multiplication Network
- Church Planting Profiles
- ARCCChurches.com
- Assessment Centre-C2C Collective
- Church Planter Assessment Center/ 80plusmillion
- Onefocus.com
- Exponential.org

**Ex: my roadhouse conversation. However, they have some very scientific observations to help with the assessment ( John/ Guy)**

6. Prophetic Confirmation is something that does not get mentioned in most material written by church planting experts ,yet it was a significant tool in the early church to discern the will of God and His timing in launching their ministry.

“Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.” Acts 13:1-3 NIV

“Timothy, my son, I am giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by recalling them you may fight the battle well,” 1 Timothy 1:18 NIV

**I go and I fight by the prophecies spoken over me**

7. They have to be psychologically stable to handle the relational intensity of Lead Pastoring

**Ex: my conversation with Bill**

- a. They can resolve conflict in a constructive way
- b. They can process criticism and judgment from others ( **not going to be up all night**)
- c. They can experience rejection without going into depression ( **people will leave you, choose for you not to be their pastor, judge you as missing God, get attracted to another church...To you, they are family but they may see it differently**)
- d. They can confront effectively to resolve issues without losing the person they are confronting.
- e. They possess good listening skills. **They hear people's hearts**

- f. They can adjust when others speak into their lives. **Your call does not mean you have it all together**
- g. They can forgive and not hold grudges. **can't be mad at the people you serve**
- h. They practice open transparency and refuse to tolerate in themselves or others passive aggressive behaviors. **Disagree/ give your opinion/ resolve with the person who frustrates you**
- i. They create healthy boundaries so that they are not moved away by the carnal expectations of others from their responsibility before God. **" I need you now" so do others**
- j. They do not let discouragement dominate them.

### **Shake it off and rally**

## **II. What should be the qualifications of a member of a church plant team?**

- A. They should have a clear word from God that they are supposed to go on the team. ( **this will cost and be risky- Sam and Juana Lee Baker**)
- B. They have fully evaluated the responsibilities and challenges they will face on this team. ( **For the first two years, they will have to set personal needs aside**)
- C. They must go to serve in any capacity not feel privileged to get a position when the church plant grows. ( **no agenda but to serve**)
- D. They must prove to be faithful in the sending church. ( **what they were in the mother church is what they will be on the CP team**)
- E. They must be willing to work ( this does not mean that they become slaves and free labor for the church planter).
- F. They should have a history of being submissive.( **not passive**)
- G. They should be stable in their marriage and relationships. ( **can't be trying to fix the team while trying to get the church out the gate**)
- H. They should be committed and knowledgeable of the goals and vision of the church plant and that this is not a democracy. ( **they can empower the vision but it is birthed in the lead man**)
- I. They should have their loyalty tested in adversity. **What are they like when things go bad**
- J. They should be financial givers ( **we give to what we value**)



