

ZONDERVAN REFLECTIVE

Church Plantology
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WHAT IS CHURCH PLANTOLOGY?



REFLECT

- Are you more interested in church planting or church starting?
- Imagine that you are from another culture: European, Asian, African, or South American. You visit a new North American church plant.
 What do you see? What are some similarities and differences between a new North American church plant and a first-century church plant?
- Imagine that you have a time machine and travel back to the first century to visit a church that Paul planted, such as the church at Ephesus.



DISCUSS

- Why is the distinction between church planting and church starting important for church planters to understand? What are the implications?
- What are your plans for church planting? What is your role in church planting?
- The author argues that there are three Pauline principles of church planting:
 - 1. infiltrating the marketplace
 - 2. infiltrating public gathering places
 - 3. effective discussions about the gospel

How do you see these being implemented in your plans for church planting?



CHALLENGE

• The author argues that effective church planting will look very different from the common conception of starting new churches. How prepared are you to violate cultural norms? What will it take to pursue church planting from a biblical perspective as opposed to the way it's been portrayed in your denomination, seminary, or fellowship?

THE PLANTER'S ROOKIE MISTAKES



REFLECT

 The author argues that Paul learned from mistakes he made early in his church planting efforts. What mistakes have you made? What did you learn?



DISCUSS

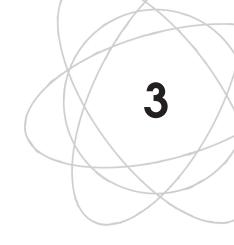
- Successful church planting requires the empowering, activation, and deployment of every believer. How does this look in your denomination, fellowship, or organization? What are some areas for improvement? What are some areas of strength?
- The author argues that Paul learned from each of his missionary journeys. What did he learn on each journey, and how did each lesson build upon what he had learned before?
- What are some advantages and disadvantages of bivocational church planting?
- What are some advantages and disadvantages of church planting as a vocational ministry?



CHALLENGE

How do you feel about a career in bivocational church planting? Are you
willing to work for a living for the rest of your life and pursue ministry
without getting paid?

THE BIBLICAL PATTERNS OF PLANTING





REFLECT

- How do you feel God has prepared you to plant churches? What experiences have shaped your practical theology of church planting? What vocational and educational training shaped your ideas and values regarding church planting?
- Who are the key people who shaped your understanding of church planting?



- At the time when Paul and other first-century Christians planted churches, the vast majority of their scriptures were the Old Testament. Read Romans 15, noting verse 4, and 1 Corinthians 10, noting verse 11. How does Paul use his knowledge of the Old Testament to apply principles to the churches? What are some other examples of how our knowledge of the Old Testament can inform our church planting efforts?
- What is a "missionary stance"? How do we imitate Christ in adopting this posture toward ministry?
- When is it necessary or advisable to have a "base of operations" from which to launch church planting missions? What are the alternatives, and when are they called for?

- Jesus's disciples learned from Jesus and from their experiences doing ministry, which the author calls "a field-training mission." You're reading a textbook on church planting. What can be learned in the field that cannot be learned from a book?
- Paul learned to build churches from his own experience. However, experience is more valuable for knowing how (i.e., skill) than for knowing what (i.e., facts). When lessons learned from experience conflict with more reliable sources of truth, such as Scripture, how can we gain wisdom from experience without straying from the truth?

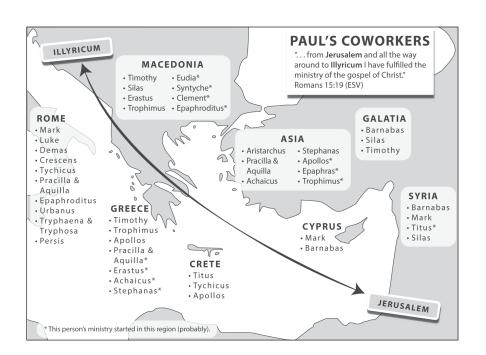


CHALLENGE

- The author identifies eleven missional practices Paul learned from Jesus:
 - 1. Missionary stance
 - 2. Gospel proclamation
 - 3. Targeted mission
 - 4. Base of operations
 - 5. Strike-team model
 - 6. Network approach
 - 7. Finding the man of peace
 - 8. A discipleship method
 - 9. A field-training mission
 - 10. Ministry in a public space
 - 11. Love for people

Evaluate your readiness for church planting against these missional practices. Where are you lacking? Where are you prepared?

THE PLANTER'S GIFTING



REFLECT

The author argues that an apostle, properly understood, is a person sent on mission. However, some apostles were the twelve Jesus chose, who were distinguished by their having seen the risen Lord, having been there from the beginning, and having performed miracles. Review the material on the distinction between the twelve apostles and all the other Christians who were also sent on mission. Is this consistent with what you have been taught? Have you ever considered yourself to have the spiritual gifting of being an apostle?



- Paul uses five metaphors to describe the apostolic role:
 - 1. Planter
 - 2. Foundation layer
 - 3. Architect
 - 4. Father
 - 5. Ambassador
- Review the passages in 1 Corinthians that use these metaphors. How
 do they combine to provide a more complete picture than any one metaphor alone? Why were five metaphors necessary to capture the role that
 Paul is describing?
- The author argues that apostles are sent, as opposed to being called. How does this look in your denomination, fellowship, or organization? What is the process by which the leadership chooses people to send? Is there a role for a church planter's sense of calling in this process?
- The author lists eight activities of apostolic planters:
 - 1. Heralds the gospel
 - 2. Recruits and trains others
 - 3. Models bold pioneering faith
 - 4. Plants churches
 - 5. Strategically sends
 - 6. Pioneers cross-cultural bridges
 - 7. Catalyzes mission
 - 8. Seeds contagious vision
- Are these core competencies for every church planter? Which are mandatory for every church planter, and which could be accomplished by a specific member(s) of the team?



- Think about the section on being sent to someone, somewhere, or something. Do any of these types of sending apply to you? How might viewing being sent from this perspective help you understand your mission as a church planter?
- The author lists ten statements that might reveal if you are an apostle (i.e., "you are an apostle if..."). Consider each statement and rate yourself from 0 (not at all like me) to 10 (completely like me). What are your lowest and highest scores? Why? Ask someone who knows you (e.g., someone you disciple, someone who disciples you) to rate you on these statements. Do their ratings match yours?

THE PLANTER'S CHARACTER AND HEALTH



REFLECT

- What are your motives for church planting?
- "Character trumps gifting," but we seek to use our spiritual gifts. What areas of your character prevent you from fully using your spiritual gifts?



DISCUSS

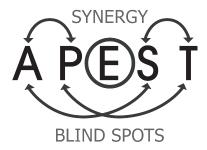
- How do you reconcile the need for holistic health in church planters relational, physical, mental, and spiritual—with the need for sufficient church planters and the need to mobilize every Christian? What is the role of a Christian who is not particularly healthy? How much of this chapter is aspirational?
- "Character trumps gifting," but we prefer gifted individuals for certain roles in the church. How can your leadership guard against overlooking character flaws in gifted people?



CHALLENGE

 What are your motives for church planting? Interview a few people who really know you. Ask them to describe your motives for planting churches. Did they identify any false motives? Do their descriptions match yours?

The Synergy and Blind Spots of the APEST Functions





REFLECT

• Church planting is a team sport. Imagine your favorite professional (or collegiate) basketball team. Now visualize the opposing coach sending only one player to take on your team.



- How does your denomination, fellowship, or organization understand church planting teams? What are some similarities and differences with the APEST approach?
- Write down APEST like an eye chart, with bigger letters for the roles you identify with more closely and smaller letters for the others. Compare your eye charts with those of your your teammates and discuss.

- Another word that describes synergy is potentiation. For example, caffeine potentiates the effects of acetaminophen, so they are often given together for certain types of headaches. How might a team member gifted in prophecy potentiate the effectiveness of the apostle on the team? Why does a teacher potentiate the effectiveness of a shepherd?
- Another way of describing the way team roles balance each other is to say they complement one another. For example, in Genesis, Adam needed a person who corresponded to him, and God provided Eve, who would complement his gifts, abilities, and temperament. How does a shepherd complement an apostle on a church planting team? How does a prophet complement a teacher? Why do team members primarily gifted in evangelism need the complementary gifting of the other four giftings on the team?



CHALLENGE

• Interview a few people who really know you. Explain the APEST model of church planting teams if they are unfamiliar with it. Then, show them your APEST eye chart and ask them to comment. Do they concur with your self-assessment?

FUNCTIONS OF THE PLANTER'S TEAM



REFLECT

 This chapter organizes the function of each of the APEST giftings by their burden, function, responsibility, voice, and tension. Review these for your leadership gifting. What functions are you performing well? What functions need improvement? Were there any you were not aware of?



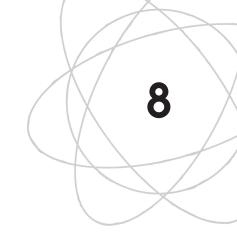
DISCUSS

- What's the difference between faith and vision?
- Read Ephesians 4:11–16. In Western Christianity, most churches have a single lead pastor. How can this be reconciled with the APEST gifts given by Christ to the church?
- Are the lists of responsibilities for each of the APEST gifts complete? What would you add?



CHALLENGE

• Human reason is biased and motived by our assumptions, values, and beliefs. If you are more conservative (i.e., gifted as a shepherd or teacher), what influence will that have on your judgement? If you are more radical (i.e., gifted as an apostle, prophet, or evangelist), what influence will that have on your judgement? How can you guard against the effects of biased reasoning?



STRIKE TEAMS



REFLECT

• Are you the leader who will assemble a strike team? Are you an aspiring strike team member who needs a leader?



DISCUSS

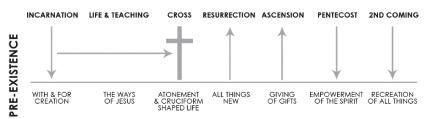
- Can you identify any additional strengths and weaknesses for the three types of strike teams: Cell Mitosis, Parachute Drop, and Team Migration?
- The author describes methods for assembling a strike team. How might they look different if you are already close with many members of your local fellowship?
- Does your denomination, fellowship, or organization have a process for forming and deploying strike teams? How does it compare to the phases described in this chapter: recruitment, training, commitment?
- The three phases in this chapter take about twelve months. The second phase also takes about twelve months. Training has three subphases: commitment phase (three months), pre-launch (six months), and launch (three months). How can these timelines be reconciled?
- The author argues that strike teams must start with the lost. What is his reasoning? What is the right proportion of "convert growth" to "transfer growth" in a church plant? Why?
- Think about the "pro tips" section. Are there any that surprised you? What would you add?



CHALLENGE

• Compare Jesus's training methods (e.g., modeling, creating opportunity, debriefing, releasing) and Paul's with yours. How similar are they? What are you missing?

Robust Chistology



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REFLECT

- In one sentence, why are you going to plant? How does your answer reveal what drives you?
- One church fellowship cannot do everything. Have you considered how many "lanes" God has given your church? Have you incorporated the drives of all the leaders into your vision?



DISCUSS

- How does our orthodoxy (the right way of thinking) inform our orthopraxy (the right way of doing things)? Share examples.
- Consider "the way we do things around here" for some of the people in your discussion group. What do assumptions about how to "do church" suggest these fellowships really believe?



CHALLENGE

 If what drives us is influenced by the people we're working with, how have the people you're working with contributed to your vision and motivation?

MISSION, VALUES, AND STRATEGY



REFLECT

- What are the core values of your church or church plant? Don't choose aspirational values—rather, try to discern the values already operating. Craft a mantra corresponding to each value.
- Examine the core values of your church. Are these the values your church plant should have?
- Read Ephesians 1:22–23. What does the "church plant shaped hole" look like in your city? That is, what does the "God-shaped hole" look like in your city, and how will your church incarnate Jesus there?



DISCUSS

- If a new church plant adopts the mantra, "Everybody serves, everybody wins," what does that suggest about their core values?
- How are mantras helpful for persuading the fellowship to remain true to the core values of the church?



CHALLENGE

• Every fellowship has pet ideas or practices that are highly valued but sometimes unhelpful. Which ones do you need to let go?

CULTURE AND CONTEXTUALIZATION



REFLECT

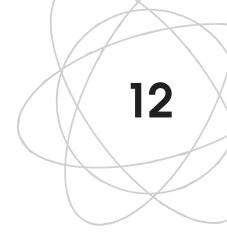
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate yourself as a researcher of your own community? What do you think are the reasons for this? What are the "pathways" of your community? Where are the nodes? Where and how do people congregate in your community?
- What are the major cultural assumptions, themes, and values of the context in which your church or church plant operates? Consider both the larger culture (e.g., twenty-first century America, generations) and the micro-culture (e.g., the university, city, suburbs).



- The author argues that you can harness, redeem, or transform culture. Which of these describes your vision for your church plant?
- Discuss the parts of culture that can be harnessed, redeemed, or transformed.
- For these examples, how would you harness culture? How would you redeem culture? How would you begin to transform culture?
- The author argues that in order to redeem culture, you need to see how the kingdom of God could infiltrate the culture somewhere. For your church or church plant, where could the kingdom of God infiltrate the culture of your city?



- Some churches and Christians are less interested in interacting with culture. This can include isolationist tendencies, apathy, or ignorance. However, you can ignore culture, but it doesn't ignore you.
 - Where do you think culture has harnessed or corrupted the church?
 - How has culture conformed your church?
 - Take some steps to become more of a part of the rhythms of your community. For example, hang out where people are congregating. Go to the center of the community and take part in a meeting or gathering of the members of the community. Observe the cultural norms, assumptions, and practices of your community in action. How can you harness, redeem, or transform the culture of your community?



DISCIPLESHIP AS A LIFESTYLE



REFLECT

- Many Christians are not, and have not, been involved in a personal discipleship relationship. The Barna report found that most Christians don't practice discipleship. Have you been involved in formal discipleship? (Solo study does not count.)
- How have you been discipled?
- How have you practiced discipleship?
- Do you have disciples?



DISCUSS

- The author provides a simple but practical model of discipleship based on time, teaching, and tactics. This model includes ideas such as, "This is how Jesus did it, this is how you do it, this is how you'll train them to do it." Where do time, teaching, and tactics overlap? Where are they distinct?
- From this bare-bones model of discipleship, where would you expand the model with greater information and detail?
- A general truism of learning is that the best approach is direct instruction with deliberate practice and feedback. A disciple is a learner. How does your model of discipleship incorporate direct instruction, deliberate practice, and feedback?



CHALLENGE

• There are entire libraries of books and materials on discipleship. Articulate a workable model of discipleship for your present circumstances and then commit to expanding your knowledge and practice by studying some of the vast resources available.

CHURCH PLANTING MODELS

13



REFLECT

- The author argues that all the forms of church we have today exist in the Scriptures, from megachurches to house churches to microchurches. However, we become attached to our particular model of gathering. Think about your gathering. Why does it take this form? Is this how you would have designed it?
- Consider crafting a service based on multiple forms of church. How would it look?
- Ben Ingebretson shares four criteria for guiding you to a right model:
 - 1. Will the model help you reach the underserved?
 - 2. Will the model leverage the resources you have?
 - 3. Will the model fit the gifts and calling of your team?
 - 4. Will the model align with where God is leading you?



- The author argues that we become attached to our particular model of gathering. However, models should form naturally from the exercising of spiritual gifts (e.g., apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, teacher). Models are last in the progression from drive, to vision, to mission, and finally to models. Is your mission faithfully reflected in your model? Have you been practicing what you've inherited?
- Discuss appropriate models for various contexts and communities. Consider how the church planters' drive, vision, and mission leads to a model for:
 - A prison ministry
 - An inner-city house church
 - · A rural community church
 - A suburban college church



• Examine your gatherings in light of the model of church they represent, the mission they serve, and the vision they reflect. Are the gatherings consistent with the vision, the mission, and the model? What parts of your gathering are overvalued? How would you temper your devotion to a model or elements of your gathering that you prefer when your vision and mission aren't faithfully represented and advanced?

SPIRITUAL DYNAMICS OF CHURCH PLANTING



REFLECT

- The author uses military terms and imagery in this chapter. The military operates under the authority of its leadership. Church planters must operate under the authority of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. What does this look like for your church planting ambitions? For example, the power of the Holy Spirit is unleashed where God is working. How do you know that your plans are consistent with where God is working?
- Read Ephesians 6:10–20. The military terms and imagery also reinforce the fact that church planting involves entering a spiritual war. Although our plans involve the people, communities, and institutions of this world, there are also spiritual forces involved that we cannot see. How are you and your team using the tools and tactics of spiritual warfare?



DISCUSS

- Prayer is the foundation of church planting. How would a church planting team ensure that they are not neglecting the ministry of prayer at multiple levels of the fellowship?
 - The planting team and leadership
 - The workers
 - The body of Christ involved in the church fellowship
 - Individual believers



- How have you been spiritually transformed by the process of aspiring to be, becoming, or being a church planter?
- If you agree that part of your transformation involved a transition from human plans and self-effort to greater reliance on the Holy Spirit and appreciation of the spiritual dynamics of Christian ministry, what were the key events, experiences, and relationships that contributed to this understanding?





REFLECT

- The author argues that the gifting of the Holy Spirit is often apparent in the burdens people have. What are you burdened to do? What spiritual gifts might this indicate?
- The author argues that the progression from discovering, to developing, to deploying spiritual gifts is rooted in the mission for which the Holy Spirit gave people those gifts. How has the Holy Spirit provided the needed gifting to accomplish the mission you and your team are on?



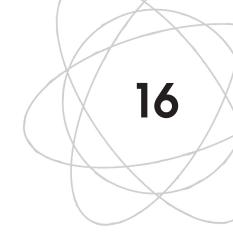
DISCUSS

- The APEST gifts in Ephesians are often discussed in relation to church leaders and church planting teams. How can leaders use their gifts to equip others to use those gifts? How do spiritual gifts go beyond the minister being gifted to include the minister being able to equip others in that (or other) gifts?
- How do church planters and leaders help people discover their spiritual gifts at a deeper level than the use of their preferences (e.g., paper-and-pencil spiritual gift inventories)?



CHALLENGE

• Memorize as many of the "one another" statements and commands listed in this chapter as you can. Commit to obeying these commands in your fellowship or church plant to nurture authentic fellowship.



SCATTERING ON MISSION

MISSIONAL RHYTHMS TABLE

	Benefits	Challenges	Church Planting Application
Places			
Hobbies			
People			



REFLECT

- Do you see the people in your community as people for whom Christ died? How does this compel your missionary efforts?
- How can your daily routine help you engage in mission in daily life?



- The author provides four "big ideas." Discuss each of them in turn, expanding on the explanation in the text.
 - Evangelism cannot be an activity performed out of duty, but must be a lifestyle of love. How does a lifestyle of love fuel evangelism in your life?
 - Evangelism comes from genuinely caring for people as God does. When was the last time your heart broke with compassion for a specific person who doesn't know God?

- Evangelism is the gospel according to you and everyone else. What
 does this mean? Practice sharing the gospel in ways that would resonate with your community.
- Evangelism should be a little scary. If you're scared, you're doing it right. Which of these is the biggest emotional barrier to evangelism for you—fear, insecurity, or rejection?



- Meditate on Acts 1:8 and Matthew 28:18–20 one phrase at a time.
 What are all the indicatives and imperatives in these passages? Pray through these verses, asking for illumination to fully understand how they apply to you in your specific context.
- Craft a personal plan for how you will reach your Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth. (Do the hard work of spending time in the detail of incorporating it into your rhythms, relationships, benefits, and challenges).
- Craft a plan for how your church will reach your Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth.

GATHERING ON MISSION



REFLECT

- Where are the "third spaces" in your community?
- What public spaces in your community would be best for a public meeting?



DISCUSS

- Plan a gathering for the following public spaces:
 - A college campus
 - A suburban high school
 - The mall where people used to shop, but that is now mostly frequented by senior citizens walking indoors and high school students in the food court
 - An outdoor mall where people shop, eat, and wait for their movie time
 - A local park with lots of playgrounds for children



CHALLENGE



• Gather in a public space for your next Bible study or small-group meeting.

HOW THE NINJA PLANTING SYSTEM WORKS

Plant Ninja Planter		Replacement Worker / Fist team leader	
Plant 1—Year 1	\$1,000 per month—Church plant 1	0	
Plant 1—Year 2	\$2,000 per month—Church plant 1	0	
Plant 1—Year 3	\$3,000 per month—Church plant 1	0	
Plant 1—Year 4 Plant 2—Year 1	\$2,000 per month—Church plant 1 \$1,000 per month—Church plant 2	Replacement Worker 1 —\$1,000 per month	
Plant 1—Year 5 Plant 2—Year 2	\$1,000 per month—Church plant 1 \$2,000 per month—Church plant 2	Replacement Worker 1 —\$2,000 per month	
Plant 1—Year 6 Plant 2—Year 3	\$0.00 per month—Church plant 1 \$3,000 per month—Church plant 2	Replacement Worker 1 —\$3,000 per month	
Plant 2—Year 4 Plant 3—Year 1	\$2,000 per month—Church plant 2 \$1,000 per month—Church plant 3	Replacement Worker 2 —\$1,000 per month	
Plant 2—Year 5 Plant 3—Year 2	\$1,000 per month—Church plant 2 \$2,000 per month—Church plant 3	Replacement Worker 2 —\$2,000 per month	
Plant 2—Year 6 Plant 3—Year 3	\$0.00 per month—Church plant 2 \$3,000 per month—Church plant 3	Replacement Worker 2 —\$3,000 per month	



REFLECT

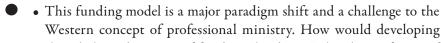
- The author introduces a model of funding that he terms "trivocational." This means combining three streams of funding: (1) raising funds, (2) working at a job, (3) accepting some support from the church. Do any of these surprise you?
- Why would a church planter keep all three streams of funding active at all times?



DISCUSS

- What are the pros and cons of each stream of funding: (1) raising funds, (2) working at a job, (3) accepting some support from the church
- Suppose a church planter says, "I'll never take money from a church!" Why would he or she say that? What is potentially wrong with that?
- Suppose a church planter says, "I don't want to raise support like a missionary!" Why would he or she say that? What is potentially wrong with that?
- Suppose a church planter says, "I'm a professional minister and don't have time for a 'day job'!" Why would he or she say that? What is potentially wrong with that?





- Western concept of professional ministry. How would developing three balanced streams of funding "hard wire" the planter for serial church planting?
- Are you less of a minister if you aren't a paid professional on staff with
- How will you provide for your family, penetrate your community, and secure a gathering space and the funds to pay for it?

GOSPEL PATRONS AND PARTNERSHIPS



REFLECT

- What is your plan for making gospel partnerships and recruiting patrons?
- Why would a church planter keep all three streams of funding active at all times?

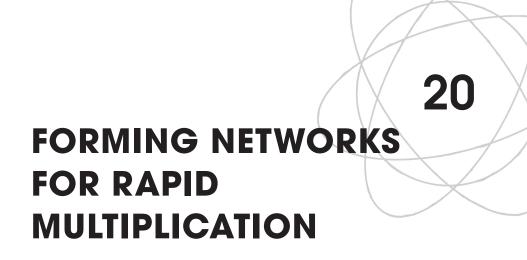


DISCUSS

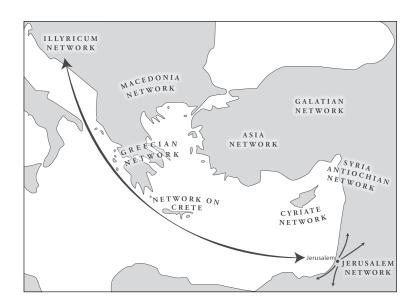
- What feelings emerge when you think of building gospel partnerships?
- Describe what receiving a rejection for your invitation to partner on mission would feel like?
- Suppose someone you know says, "I don't want to support a missionary!" Why would he or she say that? What is potentially wrong with that? What would your response be?



- Draw up a list of your top two hundred people to contact and implement a plan to call them in the next two months.
- Draft up a list of all your needs and assign names next to each of them.



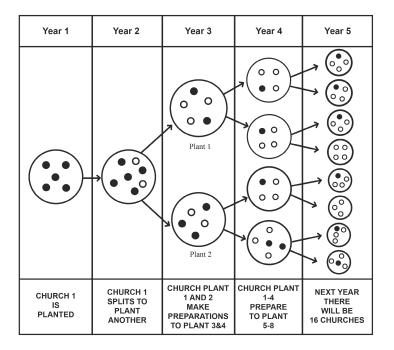
PAUL'S SEVEN NETWORKS



CHURCH PLANTING WITHOUT STRIKE TEAMS

PLANTERS	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	NET GAIN
PLANTER 1	0	\boxtimes	X	X	X	1 CHURCH
PLANTER 2	0	0	\boxtimes	X	X	PLANT
PLANTER 3	0	0,0	೦೦	\bigcirc	8	
PLANTER 4	0	\boxtimes	X	X	X	
PLANTER 5	0	0	X	X	X	

CHURCH PLANTING WITH STRIKE TEAMS





REFLECT

- The author argues that the church growth crisis in America is rooted in the leadership multiplication bottleneck. How are leaders reproduced in your fellowship? How will they be reproduced in your church plant?
- The author states that every church planting movement starts with a network. How would the ambition to plant a network of churches affect your vision and plans?



DISCUSS

- Most people consider church planting networks to be the nonprofit parachurch organizations that support church planters. This is not what the author means by network. Whether or not your team has joined a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit church planting network, have you considered creating a network of churches?
- Compare and contrast networks with denominations.
- Discuss the following obstacles to kingdom expansion:
 - Sacrificing size for reach. Why do we prefer larger fellowships?
 - Sacrificing impact for ego. Why do we persist in the "super pastor" model of ministry?
 - Sacrificing penetration for pay. How can we eliminate our dependence on a paycheck from the fellowship?
- What are some advantages of planting from a network? Do you have a training center for your church planters?



- If you were working toward a church plant, what would it mean for your plans to think in terms of church multiplication, sequential planting, and reaching your state or region, instead of planting a single church?
- The author argues that starting a local network involves these practices:
 - Start with your church as a planting training center.
 - Determine that your church will be a hub of church planting.
 - Convince your fellowship that their church isn't the main focus of the future.
 - Focus on your region instead of your church.
 - Effectively communicate that today's church plants become tomorrow's sending churches.
- How are these practices reflected in your fellowship or church plant?