CHURCH PLANTING – INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

THIS COURSE IS DIVIDED INTO FOUR SECTIONS:

1. THE INTRODUCTORY SECTION presents general principles and observations about church planting.
2. THE RURAL SECTION presents the Portable Bible School method of reaching villages with the good news of Jesus Christ. It is estimated that 60% of India's population still lives in villages despite the strong migration toward the urban centers. How can the numerous unreached villages be evangelized? How can leaders be trained to start and lead cell groups and worshiping groups in these villages? Students will be challenged to find practical answers to these important questions.
3. THE URBAN SECTION deals with the complexity of urban life, which presents the Church with enormous challenges and marvelous opportunities. We will examine urban changes in the social, economic, and spiritual lives of city dwellers.
4. THE VISION SECTION is designed to challenge the students to seek God's leading about what their role should be in the planting of churches.

CHAPTER	LESSON	ASSIGNMENT
1. Introduction	Introduction and Overview	Each student will prepare a feasibility study for the planting of an urban or rural church.
2. Church Planting Principles	Definition of Church Planting	
3.	Biblical Foundation of Church Planting	
4.	The Nature of the Church	
5.	Defining "Church"	
6.	Biblical Metaphors for the Church	Each student will read Thelma Braun's book entitled Called to Shepherd God's People.
7.	The Church as a Living Organism	
8.	The Church as a Force (not a fort)	
9.	The Purpose of the Church	
10.	The Church-planting Oriented Church	
11.	Tools for Church Planting (1)	Each student will take short quizzes each day to check his mastery of the material.
12.	Tools for Church Planting (2)	
13.	Practices for Church Planting (1)	
14.	Practices for Church Planting (2)	
15.	Basic Church Disciplines	
16.	Leadership for Church Planting (1)	
17.	Leadership for Church Planting (2)	
18.	Spiritual Warfare	
19.	Planning for Church Planting	
20.	The Mission of the Church (to multiply)	
21.	Church Planting through Teams (1)	
22.	Church Planting through Teams (2)	
23.	Team Building	
24.	Seven Seasons of Church Planting	
25. Rural Church Planting	Rural Church Planting (and PBSes)	
26.	PBSes and Complementary Projects	
27.	PBSes – How they Work	
28. Urban Church Planting	Urban Church Planting – Targeting the Cities	
29.	House Churches (1)	
30.	House Churches (2)	
31. Vision for Church Planting	Vision for Church Planting	
32.	"Z Thinking" (1)	
33.	"Z Thinking" (2)	
34.	"Z Thinking" (3)	

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DEFINITION OF CHURCH PLANTING

"Church planting" is the process of establishing and nurturing a new group of believers to the point that they are able to continue as a local church without being dependent on outside help. Just as planting a tree or crop involves preparing the soil, watering, protecting from weeds and insects, etc., and providing fertilizer as needed, planting a church requires much work and care.

Planting a church involves the following:

1. Proclaiming the gospel in a people's heart language and in their cultural mode.
2. Leading responsive people to true repentance and personal salvation.
3. Giving the new believers immediate and effective spiritual nurture, and guiding them to take baptism.
4. Forming them into a viable worshipping community.
5. Helping them become actively involved in prayer, Bible study, witnessing and in social concerns in their community and in the world.
6. Helping them become responsible and reproducing disciples.
7. Church planting may involve going and living among an un-reached people group, and doing the above. (This is often referred to as "pioneer church planting.")

Church Planting; what it is not:

1. Church planting is more than simply gathering a group of unsaved or unconverted people.
2. Church planting is more than building a church building.
3. Church planting is more than simply forming a congregation with Christians who are already members of another church.
4. It's not church planting when a group unhappily splits off from a congregation and starts their own group.
5. Church planting is not building an administrative structure.
6. Church planting is not building a mission compound.

A Biblical understanding of the Church:

1. First, there is the Universal Church (spelled with a capital "C"), consisting of all believers everywhere of all different denominations, ages and nationalities. (Warning: some who call themselves Christians may in fact not be true believers.)
2. Second, there is the local church (spelled with a small "c"). Local churches come in all sizes and styles. There can be multiple churches in the same area; together they all belong to the Universal Church. When we speak of "church planting" in this course, we are speaking of planting local churches.

What are the factors that determine when a group of believers becomes a church? When the following ten conditions are fulfilled, the group can be considered a church:

1. The believers have formally agreed to abide in Christ together, meeting on a regular basis and practicing community in Jesus Christ. (John 17:20-23; Hebrews 10:25)
2. The believers practice water baptism. (Matthew 28:18-20)
3. The believers teach and study the Word of God. (Luke 4:18-19)
4. The believers observe the Lord's last supper (Holy Communion). (Luke 22:17-19)
5. The believers fellowship together. (Acts 2:42-47)
6. The believers contribute tithes and offerings. (Malachi 3:10-11; Acts 24:17)
7. The believers pray together and in their homes. (Acts 16:13-15)
8. The believers praise God together. (Psalm 66:1-8)
9. The believers share the good news of salvation – with those both near and far. (Acts 1:8; 13:1-3)
10. The believers recognize certain among them as servant-leaders and care-givers. (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Acts 6:3-7)

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BIBLICAL FOUNDATION OF CHURCH PLANTING

There are many verses in the Bible that exhort God's children to take His love and salvation to the lost. There are additional verses that present the "church," the community of believers, as God's design for believers to live in fellowship together and for worshiping and serving Him.

	GOD'S COMMAND THAT WE TAKE HIS SALVATION TO THE WORLD:
Mt. 28:19-20	*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*
Mk. 16:15-16	*"He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.'"*
Lk. 24:47	*"and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."*
Jn. 20:21	*"Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.'"*
Ac. 1:8	*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*
	GOD'S COMMAND THAT WE ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM – THE CHURCH – HERE ON EARTH.
Matt. 16:18	*"… and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."*
Matt. 18:20	*"For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."*
Eph. 5:23-27	*"… and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."*
Hebrews 10:24-25	*"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*
2 Ti. 2:2	*"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."*
1 Peter 2:5	*"You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."*

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THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

The church was born in Acts 2 when the empowering Holy Spirit was poured out on people from many nations. The miracle of tongues on the day of Pentecost symbolized that this new event in God's redemptive plan would reach the entire world, uniting men and women of every tongue into the Church. Thus we see that the Church has been international since its birth.

The Greek word used in the New Testament for church (*ecclesia)* refers to a group of people who have been called together for a purpose. We see the "church" as manifested in many ways:

- **A house church:** 1 Corinthians 16:19 ("the church that meets in the house of Aquila and Priscilla.") Colossians 4:15 ("the church that meets in the house of Nympha.")
- **A city church**: 1 Thessalonians 1:1 ("church of the Thessalonians") 1 Corinthians 1:2 ("the church of God in Corinth") Acts 13:1 ("the church at Antioch")
- **Regional churches**: Galatians 1:2 ("churches in Galatia") Acts 9:31 ("churches throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria") 1 Corinthians 16:19 ("churches in the province of Asia.")
- **The Universal Church**: Ultimately, there can be only one Church (1Cor 12:13, Eph 4:4-5). The universal Church which is the body of believers in Jesus Christ, living and dead, from every tribe, language, age, people and nation. (The universal Church is sometimes called the "Catholic Church," which is different from the Catholic institution based in Rome, Italy. Catholic, in this case, is an adjective that means universal and united.)

The emphasis of the church in the New Testament is on people and purpose, not on a place. In the early days of the New Testament Church, we see believers gathering wherever they could; sometimes in the Temple (Acts 3:1) or synagogues (Acts 22:19), sometimes in people's homes (Acts 2:46) and sometimes outdoors (Acts 16:13). During this time, these groups grew spontaneously and the structure was simple. People turned to Jesus for forgiveness and salvation. They were baptized. They began to meet together. They recognized leaders from within their midst (Acts 14:22). These groups became churches. Establishing churches was natural, spontaneous … simple.

The emphasis of the early Church was on relationships. Members took care of one another. Some had material possessions (land, money, food, homes, etc.), which they happily shared (Acts 2:44). Talents and gifts were also shared. God blessed these groups, giving every believer in every local church a special gift (1 Corinthians 12:7- 11) which, when used according to Scripture and the guiding of the Holy Spirit, were all they really needed for spiritual growth (1 Corinthians 1:7, Romans 15:14).

The simplicity of the church allowed it to deal with the society in which it was planted and to confront the sins found there. As local churches grew and problems occurred, structure developed in order to address the individual needs of the particular group. Thus, each local church grew naturally to fit its circumstances. This was possible because the focus was on people and purpose, not on rules and traditions. This way, local churches could be established anywhere and thrive, because they became a part of their own societies, not spreaders of a different culture or tradition.

Churches can be very different from one another. Note the following observations:

- Some churches meet in a large building. Some churches meet in a small building. Some churches meet in homes. Some churches do not meet in any building.
- Some churches meet once time each week. Some churches meet two times per week. Some churches meet three times a week. Some churches meet just about every day of the week.
- Some churches have a man who preachers. Some churches have a man who just talks. Some churches have a man who teaches like in school.
- Some churches seem to be fun to be in; in other churches no one smiles.
- Some churches have dynamic, active services, with people moving around and responding verbally to everything that happens. Some churches have very quiet services in which most of the people sit quietly and listen.

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DEFINING "CHURCH"

What is a church? Are there some basic elements that should be true of local churches in any time and in any culture? And if so, what do we consider to be those core elements?

I. Four "church" definitions:

A. **Example # 1** The following definition is an attempt to define the church by using only specific references from Scripture that describe how God's people are to relate to one another. This definition emphasizes the relationships that should exist between believers.
"A church is a group of people who are devoted and give preference to one another (Ro 12:10), accept one another (Ro 15:7), care for one another (1Co 12:25), carry each other's burdens (Gal 6:2), forgive one another (Eph 4:32), encourage and build up one another (1Th 5:11) spur each another on to love and good deeds (Heb 10:24), confess their sins to one another (Jas 5:16), pray for one another (Jas 5:16), serve one another (1Pe 4:10), and love one another (1Jn 4:11)."

B. Example # 2 This second definition focuses more on the organizational structure of a church:
"A New Testament local church is an organized assembly of baptized believers, in which the unique presence of Jesus Christ dwells; who gather regularly for worship, instruction, fellowship, the Lord's Supper, and baptizing new believers, under the obedience to the Word of God, supervised by elders who are assisted by deacons putting into action the equipping gifts that God has given its members to build up that local congregation, resulting in a Gospel witness locally and worldwide."

C. **Example # 3** The following definition is much more traditional and may be the definition you would hear from the average non-believer on the street.
"The local church is a building where people gather to receive religious services from professional ministers who have been specifically trained to lead meetings each Sunday morning as well as the other activities for the people such as weddings and funerals."

D. Example # 4 Following is an attempt to define the church in its most basic form:
"A local church is an organized body of baptized believers, led by a spiritually qualified shepherd, affirming their relationship to the Lord and to each other by regular observance of the Lord's Supper, committed to the authority of the Word of God, gathering regularly for worship and the study of the Word, and turned outward to the world in witness."

II. Guidelines for defining the church:

A. Avoid prescribing forms, structure and programs in the definition of the church.
There is a tendency to focus on forms and structure rather than on biblical functions when defining the local church. When church planters do this, they can become like the Pharisees, concentrating on the outward appearance of spirituality and not on the internal spiritual reality that reflects a right heart towards God and right relationships toward others, both in and outside of the church. Forms, then, can become a false reference point for success, suggesting that a local church equals such things as choirs, hymnbooks, a piano, a sound system, a building with pews, a Sunday school program, a constitution, etc. While there is nothing wrong with these things, they do not define the church as a spiritual people.

When forms, structures and programs are part of the definition of the church, it severely limits the church's ability to be a dynamic force of change, witnessing to a constantly changing society of God's saving and unchanging love. When biblical functions are key ingredients in the definition of the church, we are on solid ground for designing ways and means for church ministries that are indeed winsome.

B. Stress the biblical functions that the church must perform.
The most helpful definitions of the local church focus on the functions of God's people as revealed in Scripture, instead of the particular forms which the church uses. Programs will be a part of any developing church. But if we start a new church plant with a focus on programs, it can result in structures that do not meet the true needs of the people. It is wiser to focus on biblical relationships and let the organizational structure and programs develop accordingly.

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BIBLICAL METAPHORS FOR THE CHURCH

The Biblical metaphors for the Church give us insight into the nature of the Church. Read the following passages and note the metaphor used to describe the Church in each.

Passage:	**Metaphor"**
John 15:1-16	A vine, of which we believers are the branches, Jesus is the Vine and God the Father is the Gardener.
Acts 20:28-29	A flock, of which leaders are "shepherds."
Romans 12:4-5	The Church is a body, of which we are the different parts/members.
1 Cor. 10:16-17	We, who are many, are one body.
I Cor. 12:12ff	We are one body, of which we are many parts.
Galatians 3:26-27	We are Sons of God.
Ephesians 1:22-23	We are the body of Christ.
Ephesians 3:15	We are the family of God.
Ephesians 4:4-16	We are one body.
Ephesians 5:25-33	The Church is the Bride of Christ.
Colossians 1:18, 24	We are the body of Christ.
I Timothy 3:14-16	We are the household of God.
I Peter 2:5	Like living stones, we are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood …
I Peter 2:9-10	We are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God …
Revelation 1:5-6	We are a kingdom and priests to serve God the Father …
Revelation 21:2	We are prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

Implications for the Body of Christ: We saw previously that the Church is most often described as a body – the Body of Christ. When Christ works in the world today, he does so through us, His Body, the Church (Eph 1:22-23; 3:10-11)! Note the following implications of this metaphor:

1. **The Body Is Interdependent –** As the body of Christ, the church has many parts that work together in a very complex and interdependent way. The parts do different things but have the same ultimate purpose, much like the various parts of a human body (Ro 12:3-8, 1Co 12:12-31). The church needs all the parts to function according to their design in order to properly do what God desires.
2. **The Body Has One Head –** Christ is the head of the Church (Col 1:18). Like a body the Church cannot have more than one head. No pastor or church planter is truly the head of the Church he serves. All the parts of the body, including the leaders, are subject to the headship of Christ. The body does not function well otherwise.

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THE CHURCH AS A LIVING ORGANISM

Just as in the "body" metaphor studied yesterday, there are other images used in the New Testament to describe the Church as alive (a flock, bride, family, etc). Indeed the Church is a living, active organism. This analogy contains certain implications.

1. **All living things change**

   Anything that is alive will change. We all experience this. Some changes are welcome, such as getting taller. Some changes may not be welcome, such as growing bald. But if you are alive, you will change. We may not like getting older, but we prefer it to the alternative. If something is not changing, it is dead!

   In a similar way, we welcome church growth and new churches, but such growth often brings new problems and new responsibilities. *"Where no oxen are the manger is clean, but much increase comes by the strength of the ox."* (Proverbs 14:4 NAS) As new converts are won and new leaders trained, they will bring with them many of their difficulties. As the church tries to witness to the community of God's goodness and justice, there will be problems. This is not a bad thing. It shows that the church is dealing with sinners. This is what God wants. Think of all the problems that Paul writes about in his epistles. These problems came about because these young churches were growing and dealing with sinners.

   The local church must change in order to answer the needs of the changing society. If the local church refuses to change, it will be thought to be irrelevant and will die. Think for a minute: what changes has growth brought to your church? Have these changes been healthy or unhealthy?

2. **All living things reproduce**

   There are two types of growth; one is internal growth. In this case the subject simply gets bigger and stronger. All living things grow in this way, but they do not grow indefinitely. At a certain level of maturity they stop growing (stop getting bigger) and reproduce themselves. Reproduction is the second method of growth. In the final analysis, the only way that life continues through successive generations is through reproduction. We see this principle everywhere in the natural world.

   This is true of churches as well. We talk about believers reproducing themselves through evangelism and discipleship. But we seldom think about this idea when we think of churches. And yet, it makes perfect sense. When we see a married couple without children, the tendency is to think of them as unfortunate (if the cause is a physical problem), or we might think that they are selfish. The Church, as a living thing, needs to reproduce if it is to expand.

Internal Growth	**Reproduction**
Key is to train helpers	Key is to train leaders
Focus on maintaining health	Focus on multiplying ministries
Emphasis on the needs of the body	Emphasis on needs of the community
Results in a large church	Results in many churches

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THE CHURCH AS A FORCE

When Jesus promised to build His church, He promised victory over the world (Matthew 16:18). With this promise, Jesus gave us a picture of a victorious army advancing against the gates (the last defense) of Hell. Nothing, not even Satan's stronghold, can stand in the way of the advance of the Church!

But a common view of the local church today is that of a defensive "fort," and not as an advancing force. In this misguided view, the believers gather in the "fort" for safety from the world, and the pastor and elders guard the door to prevent sin from getting in. At times, there is a need for this function, but having this as the main stance of the church is an unbalanced view. God is not hiding in any kind of fort, but is boldly leading His victorious army forward against the enemy.

All believers are part of God's victorious presence in the world. It is not enough for Jesus' followers to quietly sit and listen to the pastor. The Bible teaches that each believer has a ministry which God has prepared for him or her. The task of the Church is to become like an army of disciples who will make disciples (Matthew 28:19). This means that the Church is responsible to train all believers to be followers of Jesus. Our God is a powerful God who chooses to use us to accomplish His will. He gives us His authority, the Holy Spirit and gifts in order to be victorious over the world.

THE CHURCH IS GOD'S NUMBER ONE INSTRUMENT FOR SPREADING THE GOSPEL.

The Church is the instrument chosen by God to bear the good news of the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Before Jesus died on the cross, the nations were separated from the hope of salvation (Eph 2: 11-13). But after the death and resurrection of Christ, the Church has the responsibility to take the Gospel to the nations (Mt 28:19-20). It is clear from the New Testament that the early Church took this responsibility very seriously, for it is impossible to separate the spread of the Gospel and the expansion of the Church in the book of Acts. It was the mission of the Church to take the Gospel from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. Today it is unfortunate that we talk about churches and missions as if they are separate. In the New Testament, the mission was the Church and the Church was the mission.

Evangelistic strategies that are not connected to the Church are misguided from the beginning. Follow-up and long-term growth, for example, are common problems when people are evangelized through non-church initiated efforts. God has established the Church through which the nations are to be discipled. The Scriptures declare: *"Through the church the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms according to His eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Eph 3:10-11). The Church is God's plan to reach the world today, to manifest His progressive victory over Satan, and to enfold those who would be part of the "people of God."

In Jesus Christ, God is reconciling people to Himself and restoring their relationship with Him (Eph 1:9-10). God has given this ministry of reconciliation to His church (2Co 5:18-20). The Church is God's plan to reach the world today, to manifest His progressive victory over Satan, and to enfold those who would be part of the people of God.

The establishment of the Church with this purpose is a key part of God's redemptive plan. Involvement in establishing and strengthening the Church is no small task. It is an essential activity for every believer and yields eternal results. Never underestimate your role concerning planting or leading the Church!

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THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

When we think of the word "church," what is the first thing that comes to mind? We tend to think of buildings and pastors, of Sundays with singing and preaching. However, if we believe that the fulfillment of the purpose of the Church can be measured by a building, or what occurs within a building, our theology of the Church is incomplete. It is ludicrous to think we can accomplish God's plan within the few hours spent in a church building or in church-sponsored activity. What God wants for His people and intends to accomplish through us is far greater; the purpose of the Church is to fulfill the Great Commission as given by Jesus.

The Three-fold Purpose of the Church:
Jesus has established His Church with a purpose in mind. It is a wonderful purpose, fixed in eternity past and destined for a glorious eternal future. We could summarize the purpose of the church by saying ***the Church exists to glorify God through edifying the believers and evangelizing the lost.***

ULTIMATE PURPOSE	OUTWARD PURPOSE	INWARD PURPOSE
Exalt the Lord	Evangelize the lost	Edify the laborers
The Church exists for the Lord	The Church exists for the World	The Church exists for itself

A. The Church exists to Exalt the Lord.

We have already seen that God's ultimate purpose throughout all of creation is to glorify Himself. God's glory represents all that is true of Himself: His nature, attributes, character and actions. God's own glory is His chief aim for eternity and man's chief purpose for existence. He is working out His eternal purposes toward this end. God's own glory is the final purpose of the Church (Rom 15:6, 9; Eph 1:5ff; 2 Thes 1:12; 1 Peter 4:11).

God is glorified (revealed, made known) when we worship Him (Jn 4:23), offer prayer and praise to Him (Ps 50:23) and live a godly life (Jn 15:8). *"Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God"* (1Cor 10:31). This is true for individual Christians and for His Church.

B. The Church exists to Evangelize the Lost.

The Bible clearly teaches that there is an outward purpose for the Church which is to be accomplished in this age. It is a purpose that places the Church's focus and efforts outside itself – the very reason Jesus came to reach a lost and dying world (Lk 19:10). Jesus said, *"As the Father has sent Me, so I now send you"* (Jn 20:21). This outward purpose of the Church is to reach the lost—evangelism and mission. Perhaps no portion of Scripture better states the outward purpose of the Church than the 'Great Commission' passage of Matthew 28:18-20.

C. The Church exists to Edify the Laborers.

The Church also has an inward purpose: the edification (building up) of its members. The bulk of the New Testament epistles were written to believers to strengthen them in their Christian life and ministry so that they could accomplish the outward purpose of reaching a lost and dying world.

Ephesians 4:11-16 best explains the inward purpose for the Church: the Church exists to edify the believers. The training and equipping of God's people as a gathered community (in worship, teaching, fellowship and nurturing functions) leads to the accomplishment of the outward purpose, making disciples. Leadership is given (v. 11) to equip the saints for ministry (v. 12), not just to do the work of ministry themselves.

The purposes of the Church can be simply stated as exaltation, edification and evangelism. The people of God gather for worship and edification, in order to go out to do the work of evangelism. These are interrelated purposes; none of them should exist apart from the others. The inward purpose (edification) serves the outer purpose (evangelism) and both purposes serve to glorify God (worship). As followers of Jesus gather for the inward purpose of edifying one another, loving one another, and practicing the functions of the New Testament Church, they are better equipped for the outward task of outreach and ministry to the lost world.

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THE CHURCH-PLANTING ORIENTED CHURCH

The table below presents two ways of seeing the Church, the old, traditional view and the biblical "missional" view:

	Traditional View:	**"Missional" View:**
The Vision:	Maintenance mentality	Great Commission
The Church :	A walled fort	A living organism
Leadership:	Controllers / Nurturers	Catalytic servants

The traditional view sees the church as simply a walled fort, a place where believers gather for protection. Often a pastor or leader does all the work while the congregation watches and supports him by attending services, tithing and agreeing with his decisions and actions. There is little vision for reaching the people who are outside the "fort." The result is that the world is not reached with the Good News of Jesus' love.

Usually in this system the pastor is seen as "the minister" and dominates services since he views the members as "only laymen."

On the other hand, the biblically-oriented "missional" Church is not simply a fort for protecting the believers, but rather a living organism. In this model, the leader serves not by doing all the work, but primarily by inspiring and equipping other believers to minister – as a catalytic servant. The vision for ministry isn't simply to maintain the status quo, but to achieve what God wants – the completion of the Great Commission. According to this way of thinking, believers in any given local church fellowship are to be actively engaged in the work of the kingdom of God. This is a radically different, but very biblical, way of viewing the Church and its task.

There are four primary phases in the planting and establishment of a new church:

Phase One: PLANTING A CHURCH

1. Concentrated efforts are needed for planting churches. Attention and evangelistic efforts are focused on the non-Christians to be reached with God's salvation.
2. Attention and efforts are focused on responsive people groups.

Phase Two: GROWING A CHURCH

1. Immediate, consistent and effective spiritual nurture should be given to new believers.
2. Prayer is a vital practice in the lives of the believers.
3. Church disciplines are emphasized for every member of the congregation. Every member should be continually learning and faithfully involved in some kind of service, according to their spiritual gifts.

Phase Three: MATURING A CHURCH

1. Top priority is given to developing strong lay leadership.
2. The church is strengthened organizationally.
3. The congregation is mobilized in witness and evangelism.
4. The believers are helped to become fully involved in mission efforts.

Phase Four: MULTIPLYING A CHURCH

1. Evangelism classes are conducted for the congregation.
2. Local evangelistic teams are formed and new villages are targeted.
3. The local church multiplies itself, repeatedly hiving off new cell groups in the same way as new bees' nests hive off from the mother hive.

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TOOLS FOR CHURCH PLANTING – Part One

- Every successful farmer has many tools to use in the planting, cultivation and harvesting of his crops. His tools may include a hoe, a plow, a sickle, and possibly others, depending on the size of his farm and the nature of his crop.
- In the same way, there are many useful and valuable "tools" that a church planter can use to help him plant and nurture a new church. Below is a list of some of these tools.
- When enough of these tools are used correctly, by His enabling God can bring about the planting of not only one church but of many in a relatively brief period of time. When God blesses in this way, with churches multiplying very rapidly (usually among a specific people group), it is called a "Church Planting Movement" (CPM).

Tool One: Strategic Prayer and Intercession. Prayer precedes everything in CPM. In fact, the whole movement must be saturated and bathed by prayer and intercession. CPM is God's work and therefore should be done with God's power and wisdom. CPM involves spiritual battle with all the evil forces, and therefore the church planter needs the protection of the Holy Spirit. Before proclaiming the gospel, one must intercede for the people to whom one is called to minister.

Tool Two: Field Survey and Research. Information is power and therefore for effective and lasting CPMs, we must have the right information. Field survey involves the collection of information. Field research and analysis is the interpretation of that information and proper application of it in the context of the mission field. Field research should be considered as a spiritual exercise and not merely the gathering of information through high-teach.

Tool Three: Focused Vision and Mission. The strategic prayer and field research helps the church planter, with God's leading, develop a clear and focused vision and enables him to have a focused mission. A Church Planting Movement will develop only if the church planting team focuses their prayer and efforts on a particular people group in a particular geographical area.

Tool Four: People Group Approach. CPM is basically "a movement of people into the church;" that means a group of people accepting Christ and deciding to follow Him as a group. Whole clans and villages While geographical and linguistic approaches should be considered, the people group approach is the basic method to develop the CPM.

Tool Five: Responsiveness of the People. Church planting develops as a movement among the responsive people. Therefore, we must be sure of the receptivity or the resistance of a particular people group among whom the CPM is planned. Field survey will greatly help reveal the responsiveness of the people group.

Tool Six: Contextualizing the Gospel. We need to make the gospel relevant and meaningful to the people. The church planter must understand and honor the social institutions. The Gospel should be communicated in the cultural mold of the people and that includes their religion, language, and ethnicity.

Tool Seven: Planting Indigenous Churches. Churches must communicate God's truth in the cultural context of the people so that they may grow naturally. Elements foreign to the local culture should be carefully evaluated and avoided unless they are beneficial. We must plant churches that would plant other churches. Planting authentically indigenous churches is the key for the multiplication of churches that would result in CPM.

Tool Eight: Church Planting in Cities. We must consider church planting in the cities as people are moving from villages to cities seeking jobs, education, and a better life. The study of urban mission is very important as there are some specific principles involved in reaching the people in the cities. An author who is specialized in urban mission has written this chapter giving the biblical basis and practical guidelines for planting churches in the cities.

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TOOLS FOR CHURCH PLANTING – Part Two

Tool Nine: Training Indigenous Leadership. Training and developing leadership at different levels is one of the most important requirements for starting and sustaining the CPM. Lack of leadership will arrest the movement. Training the small group leader, local church elder, the lay leader, the full time church planter, and the supervising pastor are some of the levels of leadership needed for the CPMs.

Tool Ten: Oral Communication. Non-literacy is a big challenge for the evangelization of India and several nations in Asia. The Bible never requires people to be literate to understand the Gospel and to experience salvation. Nor is literacy required for the development of discipleship and leadership in the church. Therefore, both literal and oral methods must be used for the effective communication of the gospel among different people groups.

Tool Eleven: Holistic Transformation. The goal of CPM is to see holistic transformation of a community where the Gospel is presented. This includes different aspects of development programs, but the priority will be always proclamation of the Gospel and planting of churches. This is based on the fact that only transformed people can transform the community. There is a warning: overemphasis on development programs might hinder or arrest the CPM.

Tool Twelve: Spiritual Power Encounter. Church Planting involves a spiritual power encounter. Satan has been enslaving people, and he will not tolerate it when we invade his kingdom and give freedom to the captives. The church planter should identify the enemy and prepare to encounter him. Prayer walks, strategic intercession, and spiritual mapping are some of the ways we can encounter the evil forces and plant churches.

Tool Thirteen: Church and Mission Structures. As the Movement develops, the structures should also develop. Forming new mission structures would greatly help the CPM. Each mission should focus on certain people groups and work toward starting and sustaining the movement. Church denominational structure will strengthen the movement and enable it to sustain itself for a longer time. The church structure also will protect the newly formed churches from heresies and splits. However, these church and mission structures should be flexible and introduced according to the local people's cultural relevance.

Tool Fourteen: Persecution in the Context of CPM. All good work attracts opposition, and therefore CPM will face opposition, both within and without. Satan, the enemy of the soul, will do all that he can to bring opposition and persecution in the context of CPM. Satan uses individuals as well as structures to disturb the church planting efforts. Therefore, it is important to understand the biblical teachings on persecution. We also should know the practical steps of how to handle opposition and persecution. This chapter will teach those practical steps as well as biblical principles.

Tool Fifteen: Partnership and Networking. Church planting needs partnership and networking. One pastor or missionary cannot win a whole new people group to Christ by himself. The spiritual and cultural opposition will be too great. Similarly, one mission or denomination cannot reach the millions of people represented by different unreached people groups. Several churches and missions can come together to share resources to complement each other's efforts to complete the job. Networking of several missions and churches would strengthen the movement and accelerate the CPMs further among the unreached people. We need to consider establishing a network of missions and churches for each state and for each of the major people groups in India.

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PRACTICES FOR CHURCH PLANTING – Part One

Just as someone can learn how to grow corn or other crops, the art of planting a church can be learned by anyone who desires and is committed to it. To be an effective church-planter one must master certain principles and practices.

Similarly, planting a church involves the following practices. These different activities can all be adapted and contextualized, whether in an urban, rural or tribal context:

1. Pray – and recruit a prayer team – to seek God's guidance and power. Be sure of God's leading. As you seek God's leading, don't forsake the godly counsel of your spiritual elders and mentor(s). God often speaks to us through others. Prayer partners should be recruited from the church that is sending you out and from the targeted region, if there are any believers there.
2. Survey and study the target people and the area, and do prayer walks (praying for the people group as you walk and/or travel among them). Learn as much as you can about the people you want to reach with God's salvation.
3. Find responsive people and/or villages. Focus on these who are honestly willing to consider the claims of God. As Jesus taught in Luke 10:5-6, look for a "person of peace" or a "house of peace." When one or more is found, introduce God's truth to them and to their relationships.
4. Find any believers (from outside the targeted people group) who might be living in the region (government workers, perhaps, or believers living there for jobs or business, etc.). Build the vision with them of churching the unreached people group, and recruit their support in prayer and in any other ways.
5. Live among the people and identify with them in order to earn their trust. This may take months, even longer.
6. Work with a team. Planting churches is an invasion of the enemy's territory; you will face hostile spiritual opposition. It is dangerous to face the enemy alone. As much as possible, work with other children of God.
7. Conduct public meetings, sharing about your faith in God and explaining His truths. Find ways to tell the story of God's love and of His efforts to redeem us to Himself. Present the Gospel using indigenous methods. Use the music, drama and other cultural forms familiar to the target people.
8. Replace the old references to false gods with teaching about the One True God.
9. Identify and pray for people's felt needs. Our God loves us wholly and is all-powerful to help those with whom we're working, no matter what the needs are.
10. Be ready for spiritual power encounters. There will be resistance as we confront the spiritual forces of darkness that have kept people in bondage for so long. In God's power we must be prepared to overcome this opposition. Destroy by fire all fetishes and other tools of the kingdom of darkness (Heb. 12:1-2). (As stated in No. 6 above, it is especially important to work with your team when confronting the kingdom of darkness.)
11. Invite people to receive Christ into their hearts and lives. Make it clear and simple what must be done to become God's children, and offer opportunities for the people to accept Christ into their hearts.
12. Bring believers and seekers together daily to pray and hear the Word of God. (This is sometimes called a "cell group.") New believers are very much like young lambs; they need to be daily protected and nurtured to maturity. Praying and praising God together, and hearing the Word of God every day, give immediate and effective spiritual nurture. A good way for new believers to begin learning about their new faith is to study the Gospel of John. Encourage those who are literate to read with you through John, underlining the words "life" and "believe" as they read (to help them recognize God's wonderful teaching about these important themes in the Gospel). Also, observe what John writes about relationships. When a cell group grows to about twenty members, divide it and form a second cell group.

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PRACTICES FOR CHURCH PLANTING – Part Two

13. Give pre-baptismal teaching. When a family or a group has invited God into their hearts, explain to them and prepare them for baptism. This shouldn't be a long process. (In the New Testament, new believers were usually baptized immediately.) AIDA's *Tentmaker Manual* is an excellent resource for this early discipleship training.
14. Baptize the new believers. Baptism services give the new believers an opportunity to confirm their step of faith, and are a wonderful way to witness their new spiritual birth to their relatives and neighbors. (Clarify that baptism and church attendance don't save.)
15. As your group grows, select, appoint and train elders. This will help ensure the spiritual stability of the local body and will help provide leaders for further church plants. Give these elders specialized training to help lead the different ministries of the body: train some to share with you in the teaching and preparation of baptism candidates, others to stand with you against the powers of darkness and to work with you for complete deliverance of your believers from all powers, curses and any other bondage of darkness, etc.
16. Teach the believers to share God's love, beginning with their own family. Believers are blessed of God to bring His blessing to others. Help the believers find effective ways of doing this. Model this in your own ministry; take believers with you as you witness so that they will learn from your example. Schedule special events in which to involve your spiritual disciples in proclaiming God's salvation to the lost, both in your community and beyond.
17. Bring a Portable Bible School (PBS) to your community to give further teaching to your elders. You may want to invite all the believers in your community to attend the PBS, as well as some from nearby communities as well.
18. As you disciple your flock try to ensure that every believer has an active role. As your group grows, link "mentor-mentee" teams together, putting a more mature believer with a less mature believer for every duty in the life and activities of your church group. In this way the younger believer can learn from the more mature believer and leaders will be multiplied for the strengthening of the body and for leadership of new cell groups.
19. Help the new believers procure a place where they can worship and pray. This can usually be in the home or courtyard of a believer until the number of believers becomes too great. Eventually, it may become optimum to build a chapel in which to meet and pray.
20. When your group becomes large enough – with from 15 to 20 adults – divide the group to start a second cell group. Every time a group grows large enough, divide it again. In this way, the fellowship in these groups will remain close and all the believers will have full opportunity to exercise their spiritual gifts. Each cell group should meet together daily for prayer and Scripture reading, then all the groups can meet together on Sundays for plenary worship and the preaching of the Word.
21. As God leads and blesses, the number of believers and cell groups will continue to increase. As your believers share about the joy of their newfound faith in Christ with family and friends throughout the region, others will come to Christ, just as in the book of Acts. Soon there will be new believers in the surrounding communities and it will be necessary to organize cell groups there, and eventually to find a second location – and a third and fourth, etc. – for Sunday plenary services in these surrounding villages and communities.
22. Always be on the lookout for those whom God has called to spiritual leadership. Send some of them to a School of Evangelism or other pastor-training school so they can prepare to help give leadership to the new churches that are being planted.

Please understand that the practices above are not all always or necessarily in the order as presented above. For example, it may become possible to form a cell group (No. 12) even before you begin holding public meetings (No. 7).

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BASIC CHURCH DISCIPLINES

As a church planter begins to sow the seeds of the Gospel and to cultivate the spiritual soil, God will begin to give fruit – the spiritual fruit of new believers. These new believers will be like tender new shoots which are easily plucked by the birds or trampled by animals, and quickly scorched by the hot sun. Just as a farmer faithfully waters and cares for a new crop, a pastor must diligently nurture, encourage and protect the faith of new believers.

Following is a list of practices to involve the new believers in to help them grow in their new faith:

1. **Worship**: All believers should attend worship service regularly on Sundays, both in the mornings as well as in the evenings. Worship should include singing, praising, reading of Scripture and giving tithes and offerings. As the Apostle John wrote in his gospel, John 4:24, *"God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."*

2. **Bible Study:** All believers, whether they can read or not, are encouraged to possess a Bible. They are encouraged to carry their Bible to all church functions, both in the church as well as in the community. They must also regularly attend the Bible classes. We read in the Psalms, *"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you"* (Psalm 119:11), and *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path"* (Psalm 119:105).

3. **Prayer:** All believers should attend the prayer meetings both in the church as well as in their homes. Regular family prayers should be held in all believers' homes. They should also attend special sessions of prayer, such as fasting and prayer and all-night prayer vigils. As the Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians (in Eph. 6:18), *"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayer and request. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints."*

4. **The Lord's Supper:** All believers should take part in the Lord's Supper at least once a month. The Lord's Supper needs to be administered to the sick and the disabled people in their houses. Jesus said to His disciples, *"Do this … in remembrance of me"* (1 Corinthians 11:25).

5. **Fellowship and Unity:** All believers should value the Christian fellowship. They must avoid divisions and live in unity. They must attend all church fellowship gatherings including love feasts and church festivals. As we read in Acts 2:42, *"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."* Psalm 133:1 says, *"How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!"*

6. **Service:** God blesses His children because He loves them, and also so they can be a blessing to others. All believers should be taught to serve others, not only other believers but also those who don't yet believe. As we read in Galatians 5:13-14, *"For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"*

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LEADERSHIP FOR CHURCH PLANTING – Part One

Introduction: The New Testament (NT) mentions a wide variety of leaders in the church: Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, Bishops, Elders and Deacons.

- The NT teaches that the local church has elders or overseers who have special responsibility to equip (Eph 4:11) care for (Acts 20:28) and teach (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:9).
- The NT teaches that believers are to respect (1 Thes 5:12f.) and be submissive to (Heb 13:17) their leaders, but not to treat them as infallible (1 Tim 5:20) or in the place of Christ (Mat 23:8-12).
- Leaders are servants, not masters (Luke 22:26), and their leadership comes from their divine call to serve (Acts 20:28), not from their desire to rule. Their leadership does not replace the congregation of believers as the body with final authority under the Lord (Mat 18:17; 1 Cor 5:4; Acts 6:3; 15:22).
- The criteria for leadership in the church are: (1) spiritual maturity as defined by the Scriptures, (2) a servant spirit committed to the service of the church, (3) a sense of divine call, (4) appropriate spiritual gifts, and (5) developed leadership skills.

1. **Servant Leadership** is the kind of leadership desired by God. The servant leader serves those whom he or she leads. This implies that people are an end in themselves rather than a means to an organizational purpose or bottom line. Servant leadership is meant to replace command and control models of leadership, to be more focused on serving others and their needs.
2. **Elders' Qualifications and Roles:**

	1 Timothy 3:1-7	**Titus 1:5-9**
Experience	above reproach, manages his family well, his children obey him with respect, not a new believer	his children are believers and are not unruly, holds firmly to the trustworthy message
Reputation	husband of but one wife, respectable, having a good reputation with unbelievers	blameless, husband of but one wife
Character	temperate, self-controlled, hospitable, not given to drunkenness, gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money	not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain, hospitable, a lover of what is good, self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined
Ability	able to teach	able to encourage others by sound doctrine, able to refute those who oppose

The following are roles and responsibilities of elders:

1. To resolve and settle differences in the church (Acts 15:6)
2. To take heed to themselves and of the flock, and to watch for wolves (Acts 20:28-30)
3. To support the weak (the poor, the underprivileged, the marginalized)(Acts 20:35)
4. To rule well (1 Timothy 5:17)
5. To be men of God's Word, encouraging others in it (Acts 20:32; Titus 1:9)
6. To shepherd the flock, serving as overseers and as examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:1-3)
7. To stop the mouths of vain talkers (Titus 1:11)
8. To admonish the church (1 Thes 5:12) and watch for the souls of the church (Heb 13:17)

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LEADERSHIP FOR CHURCH PLANTING – Part Two

Introduction: Church planters today can glean some important leadership characteristics from a couple of New Testament church planters, Priscilla and Aquila. (2 Cor 6:3-10)

1. **Church planters should be *adaptable*.** Priscilla and Aquila moved at least 3 times: from Rome to Corinth to Ephesus. They were willing to answer God's call for change.
   a) Change is unavoidable. Ministers need to respond to the changing needs, ideas, and attitudes of the people whose lives they are touching.
   b) When change is called for, good leaders bring others along by helping them participate in the process, not just announcing when change will happen.
2. **Church planters should *endure hardship*.** (Rom. 16:3; Acts 18:2) Persecution drove Priscilla and Aquila out of Rome, but served to broaden the scope of their influence.
   a) Leaders in ministry should expect hardship – it will certainly come.
   b) When hardship comes, ministers need to turn wholeheartedly to God for correction, direction, and divine strength. Persecution should be seen as an opportunity for growth, and as a pathway to new ministries.
3. **Church planters should *nurture new leaders*.** Priscilla and Aquila mentored Paul (Acts 18:1-4); Apollos (Acts 18:24-26); Timothy(2 Tim. 4:19)
   a) A wise leader in ministry is always mentoring other leaders.
   b) A leader should always share his responsibilities with others so that younger leaders develop their ministry skills.
4. **Church planters should emphasize *partnership*.** (Rom. 16:3) Priscilla and Aquila worked with Paul, Apollos, and Timothy. They were selfless in exercising their own authority.
   a) Ministry should never center on the leadership of one person. We are a body.
   b) Cooperation with one another is a way of demonstrating the love of God.
5. **Church planters should be *hospitable*.** (Acts 18:3, 1 Cor. 16:19) Hospitality is centered on fulfilling the Great Commission through evangelism.
   a) Hospitality is more than simple kindness; it is welcoming the last, the least, and the lost.
   b) Hospitality is intended to communicate the great love of God.
6. **Church planters should be *financially responsible*.** (Acts 18:3) Priscilla and Aquila supported themselves by making tents.
   a) Ministers should never consider the resources of the ministry to be their own. Financial support is a privilege, not a right.
   b) Spending should be a corporate decision, with committees and boards as a safety net.
7. **Church planters should be *discerning*.** (Acts 18:24-26) Priscilla and Aquila knew the Word, lived it, and were able to teach it.
   a) Many false teachers and teachings will come, but the minister of God must know the Word in order to discern errors (Matt 24:11-14).
   b) Discernment is more than observation; it is revealed by God giving truth and wisdom.
8. **Church planters' ministry should *survive transitions of leadership*.** (2 Tim. 4:19) Priscilla and Aquila ended their ministry standing in the shadow of a younger pastor.
   a) Eventually, every ministry will transition to a new leader. A wise leader prepares for that day by preparing new leaders for the future.
   b) Those who leave should lay a good foundation for the ministry to love and embrace a new leader, not to mourn the leaving of the present leader.

Closing: In this day, the Kingdom of God more than ever needs godly leaders of integrity. Satan is on the loose, and when a ministry fails because of corruption of its leaders the whole Kingdom feels the effect. It's time for the bride of Christ to commit herself to purity, holiness, and integrity in the fulfillment of her mission: to spread the good news of the Gospel to the whole world.

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SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Spiritual Warfare is standing up to, resisting, and subjugating the destructive forces of Satan and his evil Spirits through the power of Christ (Eph. 6:12).

There is a war going on. It is not a war like those that are being waged between nations today. It is a spiritual war. It is a war by Satan and his fallen angels against Christ and His Church. It is an invisible war, against unseen forces. It is therefore a war that must be waged by faith, and not by sight. It is a war that we cannot fight in our own strength, but only in the strength that God Himself supplies.

Evangelism, soul winning and church planting all bring us into direct confrontation with the devil and his minions because they are all efforts to free people from the bondage of sin and from slavery to the devil. We cannot hope for victory against these unnatural forces unless we work in the power of God through His Holy Spirit.

The war is not being waged to see which side will win. God has already won the war by the death of His Son on the cross of Calvary.

One word of caution: when engaging the enemy in spiritual warfare, do not fight on your own. Take others who are mature in the faith with you to confront the forces of the enemy.

Healing and Deliverance: God is still supernaturally healing people today, through the power of the Holy Spirit, in the name of Jesus Christ. Yes, of course God also heals naturally using doctors, medicine, surgery and the natural healing power of the body itself. God is in that too. You are entitled to ask God for both natural and supernatural healing, for yourself and others. Yes, you can pray for the sick and receive healing.

Satanic Tactics: Satan is a cunning adversary and knows just what it takes to destroy our hopes, happiness and our need for God.

As God's children, we must allow Christ to change our old sinful nature. Otherwise, Satan can cause strife in our relationships with others, in our marriages and in our lives through our old sinful habits and character. In order for our character to be changed (transformed), we must fully surrender to Christ and allow Him to point out areas in our life that need changing (Rom 12:1-2, Psalm 139:23-24).

Satan has a tool belt of tactics he uses against us; some of these are:

- **Deception**: Satan's most successful tool. He wields this tool with devastating results.
- **Doubt:** Makes you question God's word and his goodness.
- **Discouragement:** Makes you look at your problems rather than God.
- **Diversion:** Makes the wrong things seem attractive so you want them more than the right things.
- **Defeat:** Makes you feel like a failure so you don't even try.
- **Delay:** Makes you put off something so it never gets started or completed.

Importance of Prayer in Spiritual Warfare: Effective preparation for spiritual warfare begins with prayer. You should begin from the baseline of an active prayer life. It is especially important to draw on your close relationship with God when engaged in spiritual warfare. A prayer life filled with regular prayers of praise, thanksgiving, confession, supplication, and meditation is what nurtures and grows our spiritual maturity and ability to overcome the devil in spiritual warfare.

Truth is our most effective weapon in prayer against Satan. Jesus stood on the truth when Satan confronted Him in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11); we should do the same. Find Bible verses that are particularly meaningful to you – God's truth in His Word. The Holy Spirit can help. Either memorize them or write them on prayer cards. Repeat them often and use them when praying against Satan and his fallen kingdom.

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PLANNING FOR CHURCH PLANTING

Strategic Planning: Strategic planning determines where a church organization is going over the next year or more, how it's going to get there and how it will know if it got there or not. The focus of a strategic plan is usually on the entire church organization. Strategic planning is an organizational process of defining goals and how to reach them. It includes decisions on allocating resources (money, personnel, etc.) to pursue this strategy.

Real church growth can take place when the following precepts of God's Word are observed and applied:

- **PURPOSE:** Growing churches each possess a common purpose and a common philosophy of ministry that is centered in the Word of God. (Phil 2:1-2)
- **PRIORITIES:** Growing churches have arranged their responsibilities and ministries according to Biblical priorities. (Matthew 6:33)
- **LEADERSHIP:** Growing churches have godly, effective, humble servant leaders. (1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:6-9)
- **BELIEVERS:** Growing churches have mobilized their people according to their Spiritual gifts and by the truths revealed in the Scriptures. (Ephesians 4:11-13)
- **LIFESTYLE:** Growing churches have members whose lives are free of the bondage of sin. (Genesis 17:1-2)
- **EVANGELISM:** Growing churches emphasize evangelism. (Luke 14:23)
- **DISCIPLESHIP:** Growing churches encourage their people to make disciples. (Matthew 28:19-20)
- **WORSHIP:** Growing churches experience authentic corporate worship. (Rom 12:1-2)
- **FELLOWSHIP:** Growing churches establish a strong sense of belonging through various fellowship groupings and activities. (Acts 2:42)
- **SMALL GROUPS:** Growing churches develop deep, interpersonal relationships through the dynamics of small groups. (Hebrews 10:25)
- **EVALUATION:** Growing churches evaluate themselves and their communities to determine how they can best serve God and minister His grace and salvation. (2 Corinthians 13:5)
- **PLANNING:** Growing churches plan effectively and organize their resources efficiently. (Luke 14:28-30)
- **PROGRAMS:** Growing churches depend on God's leading and the Spirit's empowering for all its programs. The leaders strive for excellence in all the ministries and programs of the church. (Colossians 3:23-24)
- **TRAINING:** Growing churches place a high value on training. (Acts 2:42, 2 Timothy 2:15)
- **PRAYER:** Growing churches practice persevering and victorious prayer and can verify the power of believing prayer. (Luke 18:1, Ephesians 6:18)
- **SPIRIT-FILLED:** Growing churches have disciples that are filled with God's Spirit and with His love for others, including the lost. (Acts 6:3, Ephesians 5:18)

Evaluation and Reporting are expected to contribute value to sustainable development. Understanding what works, what doesn't and what should be improved promotes informed decision–making about programming choices, approaches and practices.

Good evaluation reports serve this process by accurately distilling and clearly articulating what is learned from evaluations. These will help us to monitor and evaluate our church planting and church growth ministries.

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THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

Church Multiplication: The goal of every local church, as with every living organism, should be to grow and to multiply.

Church Mobilization starts with someone who can act as a catalyst for expanding the church's vision for what God is doing around the world. Church leaders need to build a strong missions culture in the hearts of believers in their spiritual care.

Growing Great Commission Churches: What makes our church grow as a Great Commission Church? It is obedience to His command as given in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). Jesus Himself obeyed everything God the Father had for Him, even death on the cross for the salvation of mankind (Matthew 26:39, Mark 10:45; Philippians 2:8-11). Thus the Church is to follow suit and obey His Great Commission in our generation. He is the head of the Church – the commander of our souls. Divine authority has been given to Him and we are to obey Him! As God has made earthly kingdoms rise and fall in His timing, so He rises and grows the Church. It is God's plan for His Church to rediscover His command to obey the Great Commission in our time to grow as His body.

The "whole Gospel:" The Lausanne Movement is a world-wide association of believers who are committed to winning the world to Christ. Their slogan is "The whole Church taking the whole Gospel to the whole World."

The "whole Church" means that every believer is to be actively involved in the mission.

The "whole gospel" is God's good news in Jesus, transforming lives by His Spirit.

The "whole world" is every people group in every country, city and region of the world.

The Church's mission and "Telescoping": A telescope makes things far away appear close. We want to "telescope" our efforts in distant areas to look like what we are doing in our community, sharing our vision and values. We need to identify, train, equip, and resource indigenous church leaders to reach their town, their city, and their nation with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Three primary values we have for "telescoping" are (1) Targeted Evangelization, (2) Indigenous Leadership, and (3) Church Development. We are to advance the mission God has given to us – to glorify Him through presenting the Gospel to every man, woman and child – by connecting them in loving relationships with Jesus Christ and with other believers.

The Purposes of the Church are to:

- worship God (Luke 4:8; John 4:23; Rev 4:10),
- study His Word (2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Cor 4:6),
- pray (Acts 2:42),
- love one another (John 13:35; Philippians 1:1-4),
- help each other (Galatians 6:2),
- partake of baptism and the Lord's supper (Luke 22:19-20),
- learn how to live as godly people (Titus 2:11-12),
- be equipped for works of service (Ephesians 4:12),
- take His Gospel to the ends of the Earth (Acts 1:8), and
- make disciples in all the world (Matthews 28:18-20).

The Harvest: The harvest is a time of reaping in joy what has been produced during the year. Jesus reflects the Bible's viewpoint on harvest when he enjoins believers to ask the "Lord of the harvest" for laborers (Matthews 9:38). God stands in control of the harvest time; it is part of His work (Jeremiah 5:24; Amos 4:7).

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CHURCH PLANTING THROUGH TEAMS – Part One

Introduction: Christ did not plant a church. He trained a team – by a combination of teaching and ministry experiences together. Then He empowered His team with the Holy Spirit of Pentecost, after which the team planted the first church.

Later teams went out from their churches and planted others. Churches grew in each community. Individuals matured within them. Then individuals were called to move out, form up into more teams and reach new communities.

God's strategy is much the same today. As new Christians we join the community of a local group (whether we call it a church or an assembly or a congregation). In it we grow to maturity as disciples of Christ. We learn God's truth, gain experience of life in a relationship with God and with others. We learn teamwork and learn to live in the power of the Holy Spirit, and then become available – ready to hear God's call to go out and work in a team wherever He directs.

Many of us find our main service in building up the local church, helping equip others to be sent out. Some of us are called to go out, to join a pioneer team and enter new communities, planting new churches. Such service can be a lifelong calling, or it might be for a time of a few years.

Pioneer Teams

Christ called His twelve special trainees "Apostles," which means ones who are sent out – pioneers. He started sending them out to local villages as part of their training (Matthew 10) and later commissioned them to go "to the ends of the earth."

They began well, planting a large and growing church in Jerusalem and preserving carefully Christ's own teaching in written form. But it was another team which set the pattern for pioneer work – Act 11:19-21. This team included black Africans from Cyrene and white Europeans from Cyprus. Because this group had a mixture of cultures it was better equipped to reach a mixture of cultures. It planted the church in the cosmopolitan town of Antioch in Syria. This church was a mixture of Jews and Gentiles and it formed the base from which Christianity spread. In it Paul was commissioned – by the laying on of hands (Acts 13:1-3).

Through the Acts we read of pioneer teams, sometimes quite small, even twos, going out to plant churches. They had no language barriers to cross; so the task was often accomplished quite quickly. Today it may be much slower because it might include learning a language, learning a culture, maybe translating Scriptures and teaching the new church how to learn and train.

The principle, however, is unchanged: teams plant churches, churches grow and produce more teams, who in turn go and plant more churches.

Natural Growth

If a church is to be a good base for sending people out to join pioneer teams, it must also be expanding naturally in its own community. As it does so, it is fulfilling another aspect of the Great Commission – not only that we go into all the world but also that we take His Kingdom into every sector of society. When the Holy Spirit transforms our homes, families, friendships and working life, people will be attracted to Christ. He is attractive.

Nurturing Churches

For successful church planting and church growth to take place, local churches need to be communities in which new Christians become disciples and gradually grow into mature disciples. Unless each church can grow its own workers, the Church as a whole will stop expanding.

In Ephesians 4:11-16 the Apostle Paul lists five kinds of Christians workers, then describes their combined role of bringing the church to maturity; so that mature churches will produce mature Christians who can maintain the growth. In the next lesson these five ministry roles will be presented.

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CHURCH PLANTING THROUGH TEAMS – Part Two

1. Apostles: Just as Jesus sent His apostles to make disciples in all the world, apostles are needed today to plant His Church in new communities. This may necessitate learning a new language and culture. For this kind of pioneering work, mature Christians who know the Bible and can teach it are required – who are able to do the work of evangelists and pastors as needed and with maturity to be able to give wise leadership to the new believers and churches.

2. Prophets: A prophet is above all else a person who has learned to hear from God. Even new Christians occasionally hear what God is saying in a situation and share their insight with others. The special role of the mature prophet, however, is to be the sort of person others can rely on to hear from God. Such a person needs great humility to be willing to always test their insights, to check them with Scripture and with their fellow Christians.

3. Evangelists:-Again every Christian should be ready to tell others the good news, the gospel that Christ died for our sins, rose again, that we can be forgiven in His Name and receive new life. There are, however, some who have a special gift of telling others, whether one-to-one or to a group. Every church needs some evangelists.

4. Pastors: The word means "shepherd" – one who cares for others. We may use the title "Pastor" for a leader in a church, but he will need a team of assistant shepherds, those who can readily see others' needs and care for them.

5 Teacher: A teacher needs to know the Bible well, not only what it says but also what it does not say. A teacher should be able to defend the church against those who try to spread ideas which do not come from God. It is good for younger Christians to hope to become teachers, but this holy ambition should lead them to spend much time with God's Word, to seek explanations from the Holy Spirit, to learn from others, to ask questions, and dig deep for Truth. A teacher must also be able to express in plain simple words, the deep truths learned over the years.

A teacher is not necessarily one of the leaders in a church. Often the leadership requires the dynamic energy of younger people, while teacher needs the mature wisdom of older ones. Teachers should be loyal to leaders, and leaders should provide opportunity for them to teach.

United Teams

When a church has a task to carry out, it needs to follow the pattern God has already laid down. This means that a group of very different people, each with their own temperament and human failings, becomes a united team with a single purpose. The Holy Spirit's ability to unite different types of people in a team is evidence to the world around that He is real and that the message is true.

When setting out to engage a new people group, it is best to approach them with a team. The team should include as many as possible of the five offices explained above. Other team members can include the following:

- A film ministry team to present Christians films in the village, such as the story of Jesus.
- Medical and dental teams to demonstrate the love of God to the people by holding medical clinics and by teaching health and hygiene.
- A radio ministry team to beam Gospel messages to the people in their own language.
- Evangelistic teams to hold open-air meetings, if appropriate.
- Literature teams (and translation teams if needed) to make the Scriptures and other valuable Christian literature available in their language. And literacy teams to teach the people to read.
- Drama teams to present the Gospel in cultural forms indigenous to the people.
- Teams to open primary schools and/or orphanages. ETC.

Conclusion

Can you imagine how much more fruitful our work would be if instead of working alone we worked together in such teams to plant and grow churches?

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TEAM BUILDING

Team Building: With good team-building skills, you can unite team members around a common goal and generate greater productivity. Without them, you limit yourself and the staff to the effort each individual can make alone. Team building is an ongoing process that helps a work group become a cohesive unit. The team members not only share expectations for accomplishing group tasks, but also trust and support one another and respect one another's individual differences. The church planter's role as a team builder is to lead his team toward cohesiveness and fruitful ministry. A team takes on a life of its own and must be regularly nurtured and maintained, just as do individual members.

Jesus is the model team builder. Jesus built a strong team that lived and worked together for three years until His ascension to heaven. By following His example, we can build our own team to help in the planting of churches.

Team building results in:

- Good communications with participants as team members and individuals,
- Increased productivity and creativity,
- Team members motivated to achieve goals,
- A climate of cooperation and collaborative problem-solving,
- Higher levels of work satisfaction and commitment, and of trust and support,
- Diverse co-workers working well together,
- Clear work objectives, with better operating policies and procedures.

Team-building requires the following:

1. **Strong team leadership**: An effective team leader is focused on the goal, sets priorities, ensures a collaborative climate, builds confidence of team members, demonstrates sufficient "know-how" and manages performance through feedback.
2. **A clear common goal:** The team's effectiveness will depend on how focused and clear the goal of the team is. The church planter must ensure that the team is united in spirit and in mind (strategy, priorities, etc.).
3. **Healthy team relationships**: For a team to be successful the members of the team must be able to give and receive feedback. Communication must be open and honest between team members. The team leader is responsible for ensuring these healthy dynamics.
4. **Team problem solving**: Each team member is valued and his contributions appreciated, especially for resolving problems. A relaxed, comfortable and mutually-accepting environment is necessary for good team work.

Team building through Mentoring: There are numerous examples in the Scriptures of people being mentored to carry out the call of God for their lives, and they point to the centrality of relational teaching and training. Two such examples from the Old Testament come readily to mind. The first is the mentoring of Joshua by Moses. Joshua was trained to take leadership of Israel for more than forty years, by being with Moses observing, assisting, and serving.

The second is the relationship between Elijah and Elisha. Elijah was commanded by God to anoint Elisha as his successor. Although no implicit command to train Elisha is given, Elijah takes Elisha into his home for some 15 years as Elisha observes, assists, and serves Elijah as his servant.

A beautiful New Testament example of a mentoring relationship is that of Barnabas and Paul. Barnabas was the mature leader who took the young convert, Saul, under his mentoring wings (Acts 9:27, 11:25). Barnabas was Saul's leader and mentor until Saul reached full spiritual maturity. (Note that until Acts 13:42 Barnabas' name was always given before Saul's. From that point on Paul's name is cited before Barnabas'.)

These mentoring relationships should be in place at every level of a church-planting team for the continuous development of leaders with the goal of instructing, enabling, empowering, utilizing, and releasing gifting and ministries.

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SEVEN SEASONS OF CHURCH PLANTING & MULTIPLICATION

Seasons	Preparing Preparing to Plant the Church (Seed)	Gathering Gathering a worshipping Community (Seedling)	Developing Developing Gospel-Centered Ministries (Young Plant)	Mentoring Mentoring Gospel-Centered Ministries (Young Tree)	Growing Leading church to growth & planting (Fruit Bearing Tree)	Locating Establishing a community presence (Deepening Roots)	Multiplying Establishing a church multiplication movement (Multiply Fruitful Trees)
People	• Church Planter • (Coach) • (Lunch Team) • (Apprentice/Intern) • Intercessors	• Church Planter • Coach • Core group • Lunch Team • (Apprentice/Intern) • Intercessors	• Church Planter • Coach • Emerging Leaders • Apprentice/Intern • Church members • Intercessors	• Pastor • Coach • Elders & deacons • Leaders/Apprentice/Intern • Church members • Intercessors	• Pastor • Peer members • Apprentice/Intern • Cross cultural missionaries • Lunch Team • Intercessors	• Church Planter • (Coach) • (Lunch Team) • (Apprentice/Intern) • Intercessors	• Church Planter • (Coach) • (Lunch Team) • (Apprentice/Intern) • Intercessors
Process	• Confirm the church planter's vision & call • Determine ministry focus group(s) & area • Establish prayer support • Begin planting training & coaching • Develop ministry philosophy & models • Design a church planting action plan • Create a church planting proposal • Establish financial support base	• Establishing training & coaching relationship(s) • Implement networking & evangelism (word & deed) • Implement nurture & cell group ministries • Develop core group & launch team • Manage conflict for unified values & vision • Establish essential ministries (systems) • Launch public worship/ministry	• Develop frontline, kingdom prayer • Develop gospel worship & preaching • Develop transformational learning communities (all ages) • Develop authentic caring community/cells • Develop need-oriented evangelism ministries (word & deed) • Develop lay & gift-oriented ministries • Develop emerging functional structures	• Develop mentoring-leadership philosophy & strategy. • Develop mentoring process for healthy disciple • Develop mentoring process for group & ministry leaders • Develop mentoring process foe elder/deacons • Develop mentoring process for pastors • Develop mentoring processes for movement leaders	• Evaluate church health & growth (renewal dynamics) • Establish church health & growth goals • Lead the church to expansion growth • Lead the church to internal growth • Lead the church to extension growth • Lead the church to bridging growth • Lead the church to organizational growth	• Determine whether (multiplying house/cell churches) or when to construct meeting facility(ies) • Find adequate facility and/or real estate (rental or purchase) • (Oversee fundraising for relocation and/or building construction) • (Oversee relocation and/or building construction process) • Repeat the locating process (above if and/or when necessary	• Develop a unified vision & strategy • Implement spiritual renewal dynamics • Overcome barriers & cultivate leadership • Establish recruiting & assessment systems • Establish coaching & training systems • Establish CP parenting & farm systems • Develop fundraising for the movement • Develop church planting networks & movements
Time	0 – 3 Months	3 – 6 Months	6 – Two Years	Two year & Ongoing	Ongoing	Two Years & Ongoing	Ongoing
Goal	Qualified & equipped planter with a clear philosophy & strategy	Worshiping community with essential ministries established	Effective gospel ministries developed by emerging leaders	Ordained leaders overseeing indigenous, healthy church	An Indigenous, health, growing, reproducing church	Adequate facilities for emerging gospel ministries	Church multiplication networks & movements

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RURAL CHURCH PLANTING (and PORTABLE BIBLE SCHOOLS)

Introduction: AIDA (Association for International Discipleship Advancement) and its Schools of Evangelism offer a strategy for rural church planting called Portable Bible Schools (PBSes).

1. The PBS church planting strategy was developed as a direct response to the critical need existing in many developing nations for the planting of hundreds and thousands of rural churches.
2. The population explosion in many nations has necessitated not only an explosion in evangelism efforts, but also an explosion in the number of churches planted and the number of leaders trained to lead these rural churches. Too often the Church has not been able to respond to these urgent needs.
3. Bible schools and theological seminaries have been the primary training agencies of the Church, but they have not been able to adequately respond to the desperate cries for church leaders coming from our villages.
4. Many seminaries and Bible schools are in cities, and these urban-based schools have trained pastors and administrators who prefer to remain and minister in urban-based churches and other urban ministry centers.
5. The theological schools have their place, but short-term training is also needed to respond to those called to serve, but who cannot come to the city for years of study. Since seminaries and Bible schools aren't training pastors fast enough to provide a church within reach of every inhabitant of the Earth, we propose a PBS which can go out and find those potential church leaders who need training.
6. Church leaders all over the world are increasingly aware of the dearth of leadership training for rural areas. Steps are being taken to correct this weakness. Denominational and mission leaders are researching, evangelizing and churching neglected villages.
7. In the following two lessons, we will look at what a PBS is, how it is implemented, and how this fruitful ministry can be developed in your region(s).

DEFINITION: What is a Portable Bible School (PBS)?

1. A PBS is a school organized within easy reach of its students. It is often offered in a central location in the midst of a region with 40 or so newly evangelized villages.
2. A PBS can be distinguished from other schools by its portability, that is, the training program can be easily and quickly presented in different regions.
3. Courses go on for eight weeks, five days per week, five hours each day. There are a total of 200 lessons, the equivalent of a college semester.
4. The teaching team consists of three teachers.
5. The PBS' primary goal is to train leaders, that is, lay preachers who will be capable of training other Christians to spiritual maturity who will become part of the rural Church and who will make yet other disciples of Jesus Christ.
6. Its mission will continue until all villages have at least one lay preacher and one biblical church within convenient access of all inhabitants. In villages of more than a thousand people, we propose at least one biblical church for every 1,000 villagers.

Conclusion: Because of the Great Commission, and due to the lack of leadership training and the urgent need for pastors, and acknowledging that God has blessed us with rich training and materials, we propose the PBS as a method of rural evangelism, discipleship, and church planting which will equip pastors to begin and/or lead new village churches.

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PORTABLE BIBLE SCHOOLS and COMPLEMENTARY PROJECTS

Introduction: In the last lesson a program for training leaders for rural congregations, Portable Bible Schools, was introduced. This lesson will describe how the PBS strategy can be combined with other projects to bring the Gospel to new regions and produce viable village churches.

Project No. 1: Research

1. A man is trained to gather statistics and compile information vital to determining a region's spiritual status (the "spiritual inventory" of a targeted region or people group.)
2. This researcher learns how many villages there are in a given region and what the approximate population is of each village.
3. He gathers any information about the region's spiritual orientation, especially to learn if there are any believers in the area. If there are, he carefully notes their number(s), where they live and, if appropriate, their names. And of course he would carefully note if there were a church or several already in the area.
4. The researcher defines a region of approximately 40 unchurched villages, and maps out the area to which a team of evangelists will later be sent.

Project No. 2: Evangelism

1. Three evangelists are sent out to the region that was defined by the researcher.
2. They split up and each makes contact with 14 unchurched villages within two months.
3. They present the Gospel for three days in each village.
4. If there are any believers, or if any become believers during their visit and through their ministry, they encourage them to continue meeting daily for prayer after his departure.
5. They name at least one, perhaps several, to be the leader(s) of the group, and invite him (or them) to attend the PBS that will be held nearby in the coming weeks. The PBS will train and equip them to serve as the lay pastor(s) of their village church. (Some may prefer to call him an Elder; see for example Acts 14:23.)

Project No. 3: Establishing

1. The village believers meet together each morning. If any of them have a Bible and can read, a passage of Scripture is read and one or more lead in prayer.
2. They continue this daily prayer time until those who attend the PBS return to the village.
3. Upon his (or their) return, the newly-trained lay pastor(s) assumes responsibility for leading the congregation and its activities.

Project No. 4: Discipleship / The Portable Bible School

1. Three teachers set up a PBS in a central location of the region that was defined by the researcher. The location should have a church, so that there are enough local believers to help host the PBS teachers and students.
2. The prospective PBS students who were named by the traveling evangelists arrive and are given hospitality by the local believers.
3. PBS classes last five hours each week-day for eight weeks. Students receive 200 hours of teaching, the equivalent of a semester in college.
4. On the weekends, the students who live nearby return home to see their families. They may bring back food for the next week of studies.
5. After eight weeks, the students receive a certificate in a graduation ceremony, which recognizes them as lay pastors (or Elders) authorized by the denomination to lead a congregation in their home villages. The graduates return to their villages equipped to begin "the work of the ministry."
6. They are authorized by the denomination to lead their village church. They are also encouraged to plant additional churches as the Lord enables and minister in other ways.

Project No. 5: Evaluation

1. One year after the PBS a church leader (a District Superintendent or some similar officer) visits the region to evaluate the health of the churches that were started the year before.
2. The evaluator recommends follow-up actions to strengthen the ministries of the lay pastors and the churches in their care.

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PORTABLE BIBLE SCHOOLS – HOW THEY WORK

Introduction: In Lesson 25 we introduced and defined Portable Bible Schools (PBSes) as a strategy for meeting the challenge of winning rural populations to Christ. The following lesson will explain PBSes further, and how you will be able to conduct them in your region.

How PBSes work:

1. The first step is to identify a region to be churched and determine a central location where a two-month PBS can be held. (It is best if the PBS location has an existing church with believers who will be willing to help host the teachers and students.)
2. Establish your financial budget and make arrangements for a venue in which to hold the PBS (in a church building or community hall, etc.) and for housing and feeding the teachers and students during the two months.
3. Submit your request to AIDA/ER for a financial subsidy for the PBS, and order copies of the book Called to Shepherd God's People, published by AIDA and available in many languages, for the teachers and the future students who are literate.
4. Identify and assign a researcher who will complete a spiritual inventory of the region, three evangelists who will each visit thirteen villages in the region and select students for the PBS, and three teachers to teach the PBS.

What will the training schedule look like?

1. The teachers will present five courses, each one an hour per day, five days per week for two months. (Do not introduce any courses into the program which are not directly related to the goal of training a village lay preacher.)
2. Allow the students to go home for the weekends.
3. Give special attention to the candidates who come from unchurched villages, for their challenges (and spiritual opposition) are likely to be greater than those from villages where the Gospel has been known.

Following is an outline of the PBS course:

1. Books of the Bible (40 lessons)
   Old Testament
   New Testament
2. Doctrines of the Bible (40 lessons)
   The Doctrine of God, of Jesus Christ, etc.
   The Doctrine of Man, of the Last Days, etc.
3. Homiletics (the art of preaching) (40 lessons)
   How to prepare and present Bible messages.
   A study of the different kinds of sermons: Narrative, Textual, Expository, etc.
4. Shepherding the Flock (40 lessons)
   Lessons on the pastor's various ministries, including discipling, evangelism and counseling.
   Lessons are included on how to encourage both men and women in the work of the Kingdom of God.
5. Holy Living (20 lessons)
   This course addresses matters relating to the personal life of the pastor.
   Practical issues are treated, such as the pastor's handling of money.
6. Denominational Information (20 lessons)
   In this course the PBS students will learn of the history of their particular denomination or mission, as well as its doctrinal distinctives, etc.

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URBAN CHURCH PLANTING – TARGETING THE CITIES

An exploding population: Not only do we need to target unreached rural and tribal people groups, but we need to recognize that many unreached peoples are found in the cities of the world. A major socio-demographic phenomenon of our age, especially in post-World War II, is the urban explosion. In 1950 only New York had over 10 million (one crore) inhabitants. There were nine such megacities in 1985, and by 2005 the number had grown to 25. Mexico City had fewer than 3 million inhabitants during World War II, but contains over 30 million now. Tokyo (with its total urban area), in Japan, was in 2013 the largest megacity, with 35 or 36 million inhabitants.

India has three of the world's largest megacities: In 2013 Delhi was seventh with 23 million 2 crores, thirty lakhs), Mumbai was eleventh with 20,800,000 (2 crores, eight lakhs). Kolkata was 18th with 15,700,000 (1 crore, 57 lakhs).

By 2007 the number of cities in the world with at least 1,000,000 (ten lakhs) people had reached 468.

The Urban Challenge: Raymond Bakke, the outstanding evangelical urbanologist, explains how the dual targets of unreached peoples and urban centers relate to each other. It is not correct to think of targeting either unreached peoples or world cities for evangelism, but rather they fit together. Bakke makes the helpful distinction between (1) the geographically distant unreached peoples, and (2) the culturally distant unreached peoples. Granted, there is a cultural distance in both cases, but in the first there is also a considerable geographic barrier.

Traditionally, the geographically distant peoples have been the chief target of those we send to the mission field. But in today's cities, culturally distant peoples may be living in any neighborhood at all, and we are frequently blind to their existence as important targets for sharing the gospel. A first step is to see them as legitimate people groups who must be reached on their own terms or not reached at all. Bakke says, "They will not be reached for Jesus Christ unless existing churches become multicultural by intention or unless user-friendly churches are started by and for them."

The Cultural Challenge: Most of the world's wealthy live in cities, as do the most educated and most urbane. But cities are also filled with some of the world's poorest, most miserable people. *Operation World (2010)* says this about cities: "Cities, with their dense overlay of many value and belief systems, often break down previously held barriers regarding class, race and religion and allow for much greater social and economic mobility. They will necessarily be at the heart of future mission strategy."

Socio-economic and Health Challenges: According to an urban researcher (David Whitehouse), one billion (100 crores) people – or one-seventh of the world's population – live in shanti towns and slums! These neighborhoods rarely have electricity, running water or sanitary facilities, and are typified by high rates of crime, drug use and disease. Churches must not neglect these crores of people living in need of God's salvation and love.

The Cost Challenge: Purchasing property for church buildings in most urban areas is extremely difficult, because of cost and availability. For this reason, a growing number of city churches find it necessary to meet in homes. City churches that are able to procure property and a building should consider maximizing the use of their facilities by welcoming different ethnic congregations. Some of these congregations will desire to remain autonomous and simply lease space. Some may wish dual membership, and some full membership with the privilege of meeting by themselves for Sunday School or worship or fellowship groups. Some may need temporary subsidies. Some may later feel called to move out and start a new church on their own. Flexibility is the watchword for urban church development.

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HOUSE CHURCHES – Part One

The purpose of this lesson is to understand the house church movement. Literally thousands of house churches are being planted in the world today, especially in China and India, as well as in the USA.

These 3two lessons are included in the "Urban Church Planting" section because the movement is growing most rapidly in urban centers of the world. Nevertheless, thousands of house churches are also being planted in villages and in other rural areas.

What is a house church?

A house church can be defined as "a group of people small enough to meet face-to-face, who have covenanted together with God and each other to be the church under the authority of Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit." One might ask whether such a gathering of people can be a church. Can such a group provide a place to worship, learn, share, discipline one another, be in mission together, make decisions together, and mutually submit to Christ's authority and leadership?

Looking at the church of the first century helps answer these questions.When the New Testament was written most churches met in homes. The household was the primary social unit in the Roman Empire. These households usually consisted of a number of families under the authority of one older man. Interaction among the members of these households was intimate and meaningful. The New Testament notes that entire households were baptized at the same time.

Today, the most obvious difference between a "house church" and a "sanctuary church" is where they meet. Either is able to fulfill the commands of our Lord concerning the church.

What is a house church like?

The Bible describes the church as "the family of God." A house church is like a family. As in a household family, a church family has the same dynamics of communications, commitment, intimacy, growth, participation, caring, sharing and responsibility. Because the house church acts like a family, it is natural to recognize and address interpersonal dynamics in a house church.

One of the greatest challenges to the church today is good communication among members. The house church requires good communication. In a large sanctuary it's possible to avoid those we may not appreciate. In a house church the relationships are obvious and any divisions must be addressed quickly. The Bible says that God expects His family to be a loving, caring community. We are "to grow up in every way into Him who is the Head." In a house church, good communication among the members reflects our loving relationships with each other and with a loving God.

How does size affect the quality of community?

Size is the real issue. The church should be relational, personal, intimate, and committed. It should be like a family. The Bible uses family terms to describe our relationships to God and each other (father, brothers, etc.). Social scientists have shown that being in a smaller group encourages more participation, closer interaction, more accountability, and closer relationships. This is nothing new; our Lord worked with only twelve men that he could build into a community. Spiritual growth happens best in an intimate environment, with face-to-face accountability.

If one member is not present or leaves for some reason, the church feels his or her absence. This is healthy; every member is crucial. Because each one is so important, all are responsible to minister to each other. With this kind of commitment, the church becomes welded together with love.

House churches and growth:

In most house churches, the members write into their covenant their desire to form new house churches. Spiritual and numeric growth is part of the "DNA" of house churches. Growth stops if the group is exclusive, self-satisfied, or becomes apathetic. The group must be encouraged to reach out from the very start. Without growth, any group of believers, whether a sanctuary church or a house church, will eventually stagnate and die.

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HOUSE CHURCHES – Part Two

How do house churches work?

The members of the house church are responsible to shepherd each other. The body lends support to those who struggle, to those who are wounded, and to those who want to grow. Members must be willing to give and receive admonition. Each person is assured that even in the worst of times others will continue loving and caring for him/her. These relationships will not be shattered by conflict. Each person needs to know that is spite of difficulties others will remain faithful to him/her. The house church then becomes a family, which is committed to uphold each family member.

Because a house church is small, people develop meaningful relationships more easily. This encourages each person to take part in all the activities and responsibilities and receive instruction. Everyone actively participates in the ministries of the church. The church in the home fosters a high level of commitment. Participants either become significantly involved or they drop out quickly. The house church fosters mutual commitment. People minister to each other concerning everyday problems: family members examine how the Bible speaks to their everyday concerns. The Bible is the authority for real life situations in a caring family environment. Some meetings look like family meetings around the dinner table, where the day's problems are discussed and solutions sought.

How do house churches encourage personal growth?

House Churches offer a unique opportunity to discover and develop spiritual gifts. Every-member-ministry is encouraged; each member becomes a minister. Small groups integrate personal growth and ministry by allowing the whole church family to minister. Every man, woman, and child is accountable to the group as a whole. Members who otherwise might be mere attendees are responsible for the well-being of the others. The house church is conscious of being the body of Christ, a gathering of "priests" with gifts for everyone's edification.

How are leaders found for a house church?

Because of the small size of the house church, those with leadership ability are readily recognized. trained, and given responsibility. Ongoing training by more mature leaders and by church planters should assure the continued development of new, capable leaders.

How are the offerings used?

Because house churches don't need to purchase or rent an expensive building, an enormous financial burden is eliminated. This frees more resources for the relief of believers in need and the ministry of church planting. A cluster of house churches may feel the need to support at least one coordinator ("pastor-at-large"). This can be easily done as the churches cooperate.

How widespread is the house church movement?

The house church is a worldwide phenomenon. Billy Graham has said, "the emphasis is increasing toward the house church in many parts of the world." Observers note that the Church in China is growing at a phenomenal rate; most of this growth is in house churches. Jonathan Chao of the China Church Research Center estimates that there are between 25 and 50 million believers in these house churches. There are also thousands of small house churches in many other countries. Christianity Today cites reports from North Korea of tiny gatherings of believers meeting in homes. One estimate puts the number of house churches there at over 1,000. Reports from Vietnam show that Christ's body continues to grow, mostly in small groups. The full Gospel Central Church in Seoul numbers over 600,000 and meets in small home groups. In Mexico City, there are believed to be over 10,000 self-functioning house churches. The house church has emerged in Europe, particularly in England. The number of house churches is growing in Australia and the USA as well.

We believe that the house church can facilitate the expansion of the church here in India and the whole world. Through these small house churches, communities can be reached for Christ much in the same way that communities were reached in the first century.

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VISION FOR CHURCH PLANTING

Simply stated, vision is the ability to see. Vision takes people forward and gives them direction. People rarely go beyond the limits of their vision. How can people strive toward that which they do not see, or see only as a vague goal to be achieved in the unspecified distant future?

As a lighthouse gives guidance to a ship, so vision helps us along the way as we keep a firm eye on the goal. We cannot move toward that which we cannot see. But if we keep our eye on the goal, our path will be straight.

Everyone has a vision for what they want in the future. However, many churches have a vision simply to survive or to maintain the status quo. Some regions lack church planting movements because the local churches lack a vision for reaching others with the Gospel.

For us as believers, we must be mindful that our vision comes from God. What ultimately is God's vision? We have seen that He wants to be glorified through the reconciliation of mankind to Himself through Christ (1Timothy 2:3-4, 2 Peter 3:9). God's desire is that every man, woman and child hear and understand the Gospel.

What does this mean for us here and now? Have you considered what your vision is for your region? What God's vision is for your region?

Vision encourages and enables us to set meaningful goals for growth, both personally and for the church. Vision born of the Spirit of God will help us accomplish all that is on God's heart for the villages, pin codes, districts or the state. Even more importantly, godly vision will help us reach the unreached millions who have not yet heard the message of the Gospel or seen it lived out in the lives of the people of God.

God is much more committed to reaching the people of the earth than we are. When the Church cooperates with the Lord in His plans and strategies there is no limit to what can be accomplished. Not only is it possible to target the villages, cities, towns and districts but indeed it is necessary to do so.

What the Bible says about vision:

Habakkuk 2:2-3 says *"And the LORD answered me, and said, 'Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie though it tarry. Wait for it, because it will surely come; it will not tarry.'"* NOTE: "Vision" in this passage is referring to the revelation and hope of the Messiah's (Jesus') coming in the future. Because we have experienced Jesus' coming in our hearts and lives, we have a hope referred to in Isaiah 40:31: *"but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."*

Proverbs 29:18 says *"Where there is no vision the people perish."* NOTE: this verse isn't about having a "vision plan" or "vision statement" for yourself or your local church. The word "vision" in this verse is about knowing and understanding God's revelation; it's about being able to see the world and God's truth as He sees it. This verse doesn't tell us to plan (though there is nothing wrong with planning), rather that our plans ought to be made in light of God's revelation.

The words "vision" and "visions" appear over 90 times in the Bible. In Genesis 15:1 we read *"After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: 'Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.'"*

There's a special promise in Joel 2:28: *"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:"* NOTE: May God grant us visions of planting churches where the light of His love and salvation is not yet shining!

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"Z THINKING" – Part One

"Z" is the final letter of the Latin alphabet. "Z thinking" is a way to think about vision that keeps the final goal (Z) in sharp focus. Simply stated, "Z thinking" is thinking that begins with the end in mind. The best way to determine "the end" is to prayerfully search the Scriptures and seek God's mind to discover His final goal. The critical question for "Z thinking" is: "What does God want?"

What, ultimately, does God want? God's desire is that every man, woman and child should hear and understand the Gospel. How can everyone have the opportunity to hear and understand? One church leader says it this way: "The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is the planting of new churches."

By "Z," we do not mean a personal goal, such as the building of your church, or the growth of your ministry. These activities might be steps along the way towards the final goal. "Z" is a goal that is bigger than any one of us or any group. We are talking about a goal that can only be completed by God. In this context, "Z" is the planting of enough churches that every person in the region will have a local church near enough to them not only to hear the Gospel, but also to see it in the lives of God's people. For "Z" to happen, the Church must be planted everywhere, on display to everyone.

Examples of "Z Thinking" in the Bible:

The conquest of the Promised Land – Possessing the land was the "Z" for Israel. There could be no confusion that this was God's will ("Z") for it had been stated hundreds of years prior as the blessing to Abraham and his descendents (Genesis 12:1-7), and it had been reaffirmed many times in subsequent passages (Numbers 13:2, Deuteronomy 1:8; 34:4).

The conquest of the land of Canaan under the command of God's servant Joshua was indeed impressive. With three swift campaigns (one through the interior, one to the south and one against the united forces of the north), the Israelites gained control of the land despite the fact that the enemy remained. Joshua's army was not better equipped, stronger or more numerous than the Canaanites. But, God had promised, saying, "I will give you every place where you set your foot" (Joshua 1:3, Deuteronomy 11:24a). In pursuing God's will ("Z") with His guidance, and believing in His promise, they were able to strategically overtake the enemy.

We have a greater, more enduring Z vision. Our vision is not of just a piece of land for a home, but of the whole Earth filled with the Glory of God. This vision (which is God's vision) should motivate our whole life. Will you be a Joshua to lead the people into this vision?

Jesus and the Galilean Ministry – At a certain point in His ministry, Jesus specifically targeted Galilee, the region he had grown up in, for evangelism (Matthew 4:23; 9:35). We could say that for Jesus, Galilee was his "Z" for this part of His ministry. Jesus traveled from village to village, healing and teaching about the Kingdom of God. When Jesus was invited to remain in one part of Galilee, He refused because He would not be distracted from the wider goal of all Galilee (Mark 1:37-39). Jesus asked His disciples to pray, so that workers would be sent to evangelize Galilee. We see this prayer answered when the disciples themselves were sent to preach the Kingdom of God and were given the authority to do what Jesus had done (Matthew 10:1ff, Mark 6:7-13, Luke 9:2ff). Notice that Jesus recruited and mobilized others to reach His "Z." Even Jesus did not pursue "Z" alone!

It is interesting to note that in targeting Galilee the impact of His ministry was not contained to that region. *"News about him spread all over Syria,"* and *"large crowds"* from the Decapolis, Judea and the trans-Jordon region came to hear Him in Galilee (Matthew 4:23-25). Apparently, Galilee was a very strategic region to minister in, since it resulted in a very broad impact.

DISCUSSION QUERRY: In India today there are 159 unreached people groups of over one million, and 485 people groups of over 10,000 that are unreached and unengaged. ("Unreached" means that fewer than 2% are evangelical believers; "unengaged" means there are virtually no believers and no Gospel witness to the group.). What can be done to reach these people groups with God's salvation?

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"Z THINKING" – Part Two

A third example of "Z Thinking" from the Bible: Paul and the Province of Asia – The Apostle Paul was a "Z" thinker (Phil 3:14). He would not be distracted from what God called him to do. We have already seen how Paul used the principles of SCP to evangelize the province of Asia. He wanted to go to Asia even before God wanted him there. That is why God redirected him to Macedonia on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:6-10) but led him back to Asia to minister during his third missionary journey (Acts 18:19-21; 19:1). From his training center in Ephesus, all of Asia heard the word of the Lord (Acts 19:9-10) and many churches were established (Revelation 2-3).

When we look at Paul addressing the Ephesian elders in Acts 20, we gain some insight into how "Z thinking" impacted his commitment to the province of Asia. Paul says there that he *"kept back nothing"* (20:20) and did not value his own life (20:24) in pursuit of the spread of the Gospel.

Modern Examples of "Z" Thinking:

"Christ pour Tous" – In 1966 Dr. Willys Braun spearheaded a movement of evangelism that involved all the Protestant denominations of the Congo. This two-year effort included massive distributions of Gospel literature and the establishment of thousands of prayer cells, many of which would later become churches. It culminated in a huge evangelistic service in the nation's largest stadium. Thousands of new believers were won to the Lord. The Church grew so remarkably that the two-year plan was repeated several times throughout the '70s and '80s.

"Discipling a Whole Nation (DAWN)" – In 1973, brother Jun Balayo caught the vision for completing the Great Commission in the Philippines. At that point the Philippines had 4,000 evangelical churches. When Jun applied the principle of "Z" thinking, he was led to want what God wanted: for every Filipino to have a chance to hear the gospel and be saved. Jun organized an interdenominational effort in which Philippine believers set a goal of establishing 50,000 new churches in the Philippines by 2000. The Philippine believers celebrated the achievement of this goal in December of 2000, and the Church has continued to grow since then.

Many others around the world have applied Z thinking to their ministries!

DETERMINING THE "Z" FOR YOUR TARGET AREA

Take some time to pray and think about a region or group of people that you would like to see evangelized. John Knox, the great theologian and Christian leader, is famous for his statement "Give me Scotland or I die!" For him, Scotland was the "target area." What calling has God placed on your heart? Pray about it. Has God called you to reach a city, a particular people group, a neighborhood, or a country? We will call whatever you pick your "target area."

The number of churches needed to reach a region will vary from place to place, depending on each region's unique circumstances. However, it may be helpful to learn that for many people involved in church planting, the goal of one local church fellowship for every 1,000 inhabitants is considered "saturation". This estimation is based on the theory that an average size church with viable, witnessing Christian believers can have an impact on 1,000 people.

What is "Z" for your target area? In other words, noting the factors described above, how many churches need to be established in your target area so that every man, women and child has a chance to hear the Gospel? In answering this, do not consider what is humanly possible, or the difficulties in working toward the realization of such a vision. Rather, think only about what is ideal. What does God want? How many churches need to be established so that every person in that region has an opportunity to hear, understand and accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Seeking God's will in fervent prayer is crucial to determining your target area. Remember that on your own you are likely to come up with a target area that is much easier to reach than what God desires. William Carey, the Father of Modern Missions, said, "Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God." Your target area should be big enough so that it cannot be saturated with new churches without God being involved in the process.

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"Z THINKING" – Part Three

Today is the last class session of the Church Planting course. Over the past weeks we have learned that God instituted the Church to be His bride in this world.

We've learned that the Church – the people of God – are to be busy in the building of God's kingdom here on Earth.

We've learned that the Church – like every living organism – is to grow and to reproduce, and that where it doesn't grow and reproduce it stagnates and eventually dies out.

We've learned that we're to plant local churches among every people, tribe and nation of India and beyond, so that everyone might have a chance to respond to God's wonderful offer of forgiveness of sin and eternal life.

In the last class session you were challenged to do some "Z Thinking," to identify a target area and to define what it would take to reach it with the Gospel.

Take out a piece of paper and draw a circle on it. Write the name of your target area inside the circle.

Now define the "Z" for this target area. Write down how many churches need to be established in a given region so that every person in that region will have an opportunity to hear, understand and accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ? To establish this number, consider the following factors:

1. Population (The more people in a region, the more churches will be needed. Remember, think in terms of one church for every 1,000 people.)
2. Geography (Everyone in the target area should be able to reach a local church without having to travel too far.)
3. People groups (How many different ethnic and linguistic groups are there? Most people prefer to worship in their heart language and with their own people. If there are different nationalities and/or tribes living in a region, some groups may need their own church.)

God desires the earth to be filled with His glory. To accomplish this, God has commissioned the Church to reach every part of the world. "Z thinking" focuses our vision on the reaching of our nations through His body, the Church – the people of God. Through the large-scale planting of new churches, disciples are made and God's glory is spread. Our cities, regions and nations will be saturated with God's glory in and through His Church. This is what God desires – this must be our vision.

DISCUSSION QUERIES:

- Why do people rarely work beyond the limits of their vision?
- Which of the biblical examples of "Z thinking" impressed you the most? Why?
- What is your vision for your region? What is your target area? How many churches need to be established in your target area so that every man, woman and child has a chance to hear the Gospel?

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