Building Effective Church Planting Teams

A Handbook for Team Leaders and Mentors
by Dick Scoggins
Fellowship of Church Planters International
and Frontiers

Building Effective Church Planting Teams

APPENDICES

Building Effective Church Planting Teams
A Reproductive Mentoring Approach
Purpose

The purpose of this book is to share our experience in how the Fellowship of Church Planters have built and used teams of church planters. At this writing I am presently working with Frontiers, who use teams in working in the Muslim world. I have learned much in addition to what I learned with the Fellowship of Church Planters.

Building Effective Church Planting Teams is meant to complement the Manual on House Church Planting in Networks, where we focused on how to plant networks of reproducing house churches. In this book we will share how we have formed effective teams, and how these have reproduced to spawn networks of cooperating teams for more effective church planting. Further it discusses how we have taken these principles and extended them for effective pioneer church planting in the larger mission fellowship of Frontiers. Our hope is that it will help those who have been called to form teams of church planters; also those who will eventually become mentors of networks of teams which are spawned as teams reproduce.

I have been involved in planting churches for over twenty years. My goal has always been to plant churches which will mature and reproduce new congregations without the direct oversight of church planters. Over the 20 years, I have evolved from a solo pastor to being part of a leadership team of elders, and then from a solo church planter to being part of a church planting team. I became a team leader of a single team, saw that team reproduce new teams and served as a mentor to those new team leaders. Over the past few years the Lord has led me into mentoring relationship with team leaders planting churches cross-culturally with Frontiers. This manual contains many of the papers I have written to meet the varied situations myself and these team leaders have encountered. My hope is that in sharing them in this way you can learn from our experiences and better serve those whom you are training.

Background

As I have looked at the Apostle Paul's band of church planters it seemed to me there were two things being accomplished: churches were being planted and church planters were being trained. Some of these church planters went off with their own bands and planted churches in other regions. Paul describes himself as a "wise master builder" (I Cor. 3:10). He laid a foundation wherever he planted a church. But it is quite evident as a master craftsman he also trained other builders. His letters to Titus and Timothy live as testimony to his ongoing mentoring of these apprentice church planters who were trained by him. In this sense there was a reproductive component not only to get churches to reproduce but also teams to reproduce.

I believe God is still calling "wise master builders" to serve not only in planting the church, but also in

mentoring younger teams of church planters. It is with this in mind that I humbly share what I have learned over the years. Hopefully the ideas contained herein will continue grow as I grow in the future, since we never master a craft, but must constantly be learning. May God grant us the humility to be learners together.

Summary of Key Terms used in this book:

Church Planter: A person usually sent by a church to work with a church planting team to plant churches. Church Planters can be men or women, single or married. One spouse could be on the team having been called by God as a church planter and the other not.

Church Planting Team: A group of people usually associated by covenant (See appendix 4) who are functioning together in order to plant a church. For us teams are like a basketball team where all the members are pooling their abilities and working in a coordinated effort to see a cluster of reproducing churches. They are not like a track team where each one does his or her own thing hoping that of all the individuals laboring in different fields with little cooperation, one or two churches might be planted.

Team Leader: This is normally a man who is designated by the team as someone who makes sure the team stays focused on the task. He also makes sure the team is working in a smooth, coordinated manner. He is not the "boss", since God will usually reveal His will to and through the entire team. But he is the one responsible to make sure that the team members are receiving appropriate training and shepherding so that the team is functioning at its maximum capability. The team leader is also the one through whom the team will network with other teams and a mentor.

Mentor: A mentor is a seasoned church planter who has experience in working within a church planting team which has planted churches which reproduce. He has likely served as a team leader of a church planting team, training younger church planters in the various skills one needs to successfully plant reproducing churches. As he has grown in his skills he will spawn other teams which have team leaders who will network with him for guidance and encouragement. Other team leaders outside his immediate fellowship may begin looking to him as well.

Although normally starting as a team leader, as his team reproduces and other team leaders seek his help, his responsibilities to other teams will often preclude him from continuing to serve as a team leader. A mentor may often function on a team under a team leader he has trained. The mentor will serve as a resource to that team as well as keep his tools sharp when not traveling by participating in the effort with that team. A mentor will normally be fully supported so that he is free to travel.

The first section of the handbook are foundations principles for teams. The second section is addressed to church planters who are forming teams and will likely become the leaders of those teams. These chapters and the corresponding appendices are designed to help the team leader have clear goals and values which will lead to teams which are effective in sustaining themselves over the

long haul in the task of pioneer church planting. The third section focuses on the task of reproducing teams and how some team leaders will be called to become mentors of these new team leaders. Note the emphasis on reproduction which arises naturally from reproducing churches which are sending out church planters in teams. New teams and team leaders emerge from these reproducing teams, ultimately leading to loose networks of cooperating teams.

Worksheet:

1. How would you identify yourself: as a Church Planter? a Team Leader? a Mentor? an Elder? You may need help in clarifying your call if you have not already. (see chapter 4 on calling. You might also review the study on calling in Appendix 6).

2. Do you have a mentor? Who is your mentor? What kind of discipleship material are you going over?

3. If you are a team leader, have you written a team covenant? A Strategy Paper? (See Appendix 4)

4. How big a team do you think you will need to be effective? What kind of gifts will you need on the team to balance yours? What would be the drawback if all of your teammates were like you?

5. What will be your strategy for recruiting? For planting the church?

Building Teams

Section I

Team Foundations

Chapter 1
The Importance of Teams

This chapter presumes that *two* structures exist in the New Testament for the extension of the church; the church itself which ought to reproduce locally and spontaneously *and* church planting teams which are sent beyond the local area to start new churches. Church planting teams would correspond in the New Testament to apostolic bands. Church planting teams are made up of church planters who are itinerant in that they will work to plant the church and then move on as soon as possible to plant other churches. Both church planting teams and churches have authority which enable their members to fulfill their God given call. The goal of this chapter is to distinguish between the operation of these two authority structures and show why they are important.

By virtue of their calling, church planters enter and leave local church bodies regularly. Each church represents a God-ordained authority, and a church planter must understand the limit and scope of that authority upon him and his ministry. Church Planters work on church planting teams which also have a sphere of authority that needs to be clearly understood by both church planter and church (Cf. 2 Cor. 10:7-13). In this chapter we will look at the authority of the commissioning church, the authority of the team, and the authority of the church being planted. This authority will be seen in light of its importance to the church planter.

COMMISSIONING AUTHORITY

God delegated authority to His church to reach the world for Christ. God enables men to carry out this work by giving them abilities to shepherd and evangelize (Eph. 4:11f) equipping the church for every good work in this task. The Church is responsible to fulfill the great commission by penetrating the surrounding community as well as sending church planters (serving on teams) to the regions beyond.

God uses the church's authority to confirm those called to local leadership as well as church planters called to the regions beyond. Although an individual himself may have a deep sense of calling, God's Holy Spirit will normally confirm His calling through the church's recognition of it (For more on this see the Bible Study on calling in Appendix 6). In the New Testament, the church recognized men whom God had called to church planting, laid hands on them, and sent them off to do the work (Cf. Acts 13:1-4).

This is traditionally referred to as a missionary's "commissioning" by the church. A church planter may live by faith, having his financial needs provided from God by the offerings of the saints. But he may also provide for his physical needs through gainful employment in the area where he is church planting. This has the benefit of enabling him to develop normal relationships through which the gospel can be transmitted. He will also offer a good model for the saints and future leaders of the churches (especially house churches) who will normally be self supporting. (For more on the subject

of self-supporting church planters versus those living by faith see Appendix 5.). Being a church planter has nothing to do with receiving financial support. Our church planters in Rhode Island with FCP are almost all self supporting.

Commissioning, then, involves a church's recognition of God's call upon a man to the ministry of church planting and sending him out to be part of a team. The church planter is thus called by God and then commissioned by a local assembly. The *confirmation of authority* to do the work of a church planter does not come from himself but is normally recognized by a local assembly through the laying on of hands and exercised within a team of those with like calling. In this way, the church planter does not fall into the trap of "commending himself" (Cf. 2 Cor. 10:18). The church planter is accountable to the commissioning assembly for carrying out his commission. In this way, the church retains what we will call "commissioning authority."

Commissioning authority is important for the church planters protection. He cannot do whatever he wishes. Instead, he is accountable to the commissioning assembly to engage in activities which are in keeping with his commission to plant churches.

The accountability inherent in commissioning authority also protects the church planter in the discouragement and spiritual warfare he regularly faces. A church planter may often want to quit. But since his commission was not confirmed by himself, he cannot decommission himself. Rather, he must return to the commissioning church for counsel if he desires to be decommissioned as a church planter. The church confirms the Spirit's calling on a church planter and will likely also confirm the Spirit's direction if a person is no longer called to the work of church planting.

In such a cases where he does experience a change in calling, the church planter will doubtlessly require help and encouragement from his commissioning church to restore him to another fruitful ministry and ensure that he not become a permanent casualty of warfare. Therefore the church planter will normally return to his commissioning church in the event of a change of call. (This would not be true if he receives a call to be an elder in a church he has planted. But he should still seek confirmation from his commissioning church. More on this below.)

Commissioning accountability also protects the elder or church planter from doctrinal or moral impurity. The commissioning church, upon hearing of any misconduct, could recall a church planter and, if the problem so warrants, would no longer recognize his commission. This could also occur if his activities were not in accord with his commission.

On the other hand, a church planter retains the authority to disavow the commissioning of the church for its doctrinal impurity, or if the church planter senses that the church is failing in holding him accountable. If the church planter were to do this, however, he should seek another assembly to commission him. If he can find none, perhaps he should reconsider whether, indeed, the Lord has called him to his ministry. He should certainly not take such steps independently but should look to the team to counsel him through such a difficult situation.

An additional protection of such an arrangement between the commissioning church and a church planter is that another church could not require the church planter to alter his call unilaterally, for this would violate the authority of the commissioning church. For example, if the church being planted by the church planter called him to remain on as an elder, the church planter is protected in that he would first have to consult with his commissioning church.

The commissioning church thus retains accountability for a church planter as far as fulfilling his commission. The commissioning church retains the right to no longer recognize the commission of the church planter if it believes that he is failing to carry out his commission.

TEAM AUTHORITY

As we saw above, accountability is for the protection of those over whom it is exercised. Our flesh is so powerful and our heart so deceptive that unrestricted independence and freedom are dangerous for believers. In the name of independence, a man can easily justify wrong actions and excuse wrong attitudes and motives; he has no objective brother to reprove him. Thus, every man needs to be accountable to someone outside of himself. But our flesh seeks independence. Any freedom can be used to feed our flesh and this obstructs the very work that we have set out to do. This is especially true of those God has called into leadership positions. This is one reason why we believe in plurality of leaders in the church and church planting teams.

When a church planter goes out to plant a church, he labors where a church authority does not normally exist. The Holy Spirit provides another (though temporary) structure for accountability; the team. In the book of Acts, church planters did not operate independently, but rather in bands or teams. A team of at least two commissioned church planters provides the day to day accountability that both of them need as they set about the task of planting the church. We have found two to be manageable as a team, but three is much stronger. Teams of more than 5 (family units) we have found to be unwieldy especially if most of them are self-supporting tentmakers with families. It becomes very difficult to schedule meetings where everyone can be present and the team derive the benefit of deliberating as a community over the problems and opportunities of the work.

Like the elders in Acts 20:28, a church planting team is mutually responsible for its members. Each has the responsibility of watching out for the others. Although there may be a team leader (as Paul seems to have been), the leader does not exert autocratic authority over the team members. The team is much more like an eldership (For more on eldership see Manual For House Church Planting in Networks, Chapters 16,17). A team leader's authority is primarily for the purpose of assuring that the team is moving ahead and functioning smoothly as well as coordinating interaction with other teams, churches and agencies.

In addition to being responsible for one another, a team is also to be submissive to one another. Decisions on the team would either be delegated (usually according to giftedness) or would be made

by consensus as the team endeavors to discern and carry out the will of the Spirit. One must be wary of mistaking unity for consensus. Teams are *not* committees where no one takes responsibility or has authority. Rather, teams are more like elderships where different elders have different gifts and are called to lead in different areas. The other teammates respect this and will normally yield to a teammate when they are functioning in their area of leadership. For instance lets suppose a gifted evangelist on the team sees an opening for a network of people to come to Christ and brings this opportunity to the team asking for help of one of two other teammates. The team would not be skeptical in his evaluation because of his gifts. If there were teammates available they would go with him and explore the possibility. Say, however, all the team was busily engaged in what each thought was profitable ministry. In this case the Team Leader would likely have to exercise his leadership if he felt that this priority should displace other priorities. He may have to influence a couple of teammates to see that their present work, though important to them, is less important than the new opportunity. This seems to be Paul's approach (Cf. Philippians 2:19f, I Corinthians 16:12). Likewise the leadership gift is often necessary in a crisis. In this way, team members are mutually submissive to the team.

Gifts we have found important to recognize on a team are: evangelism, discipleship, leadership development, visionary, administration, peacemaker, etc. A member may have more than one gift and will likely need to exercise different gifts at different times. When that gift needs to lead, the team needs to let it lead. One of the most important gifts we have found is that of peacemaker. Since often team problems focus on the team leader, the peacemaker will often have to take a leadership position over the team leader in times of conflict. He often acts as a mediator. Teams need to recognize and affirm this gift since the person who exercises it may often appear retiring. He will have to grow in order to effectively overcome his flesh which often desires a peace at any price.

Thus the team as a whole has authority over the individual members of the team. But because the team does not have commissioning authority, it normally receives members who have been commissioned by a local assembly. The team also has the right to reject a church planter that a church may commission and recommend to the team.

The team also has the right to exclude a member whom they believe (through prayer and seeking the mind of the spirit) is no longer sufficiently helpful in the task of church planting to warrant their continued participation. The commissioning church should be notified by the team and should give guidance to such a member. The team cannot revoke a church planter's commission, only the commissioning church can do that. When disciplinary exclusion due to sin occurs, the commissioning church should be informed of the particulars so that they can shepherd the person back to health.

A team member can also initiate leaving the team when he believes the Holy Spirit is so leading. Again the commissioning church should step in to give confirmation at this point. We are strongly convinced that church planters should not operate solo.

We view the authority of a church planter functioning within team to be very similar to that of an

elder, but more extensive. We have summarized it as follows in our principles:

Authority of the Church Planter

The Fellowship of Church Planters consists of church planters functioning on teams engaging in pioneer church planting according to the best traditions from both Baptist and Brethren principles. Specifically The Fellowship of Church Planters extends to all church planters associated with its teams the authority necessary to complete the task of pioneer church planting. This would include by not be limited to, all those things which are normative for any ordained minister of the gospel such as preaching the gospel, baptizing converts, organizing and presiding at meetings of the church, and presiding at the Lord=s table. He is also authorized to preside at weddings and other events which require an ordained minister of the gospel to solemnize vows.

Further, as a pioneer church planter, he is authorized and responsible to recognize, train and ordain new elders for pioneer churches. Those elders will take over from him and be fully authorized to carry out all the duties of an ordained minister of the gospel according to Baptist and Brethren principles.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE PLANTED CHURCH

The goal of the church planting team is to establish local assemblies with their own leadership. The functioning of this indigenous leadership should not be compromised by the church planting team. Church planters are sometimes left behind to complete the final stages of getting a church reproducing (as with Titus and Timothy). If local, God-ordained leaders are functioning within the assembly, these elders must have the authority to make decisions regarding the church. Church planters can instruct and encourage, but cannot usurp the leadership's responsibility to make decisions. Church planters must be aware of the divisive and undermining potential they represent, and make certain they function within the parameters the church leadership sets.

So, once a church is established and leaders appointed, remaining or visiting church planters function under the authority of that leadership (as a consultant to them). If a church heads in a direction contrary to what the church planter believes the Holy Spirit might be directing, he ought to meet with the leaders and prayerfully attempt to persuade them of such. But if they disagree he has only two choices: to submit and trust the Lord is leading through the leadership or to leave and entrust the church to the care of the Spirit (even disciplinary care).

Local church authority is limited to local church matters. Thus, the newly established church cannot direct the church planting team with regard to its mission and calling since the team functions extra-locally to plant new churches (even though they may be relatively close geographically). The local church exercises authority only in matters concerning their church. As noted before, the new church cannot dictate or change the calling of the church planter, since this authority is reserved for the commissioning church.

Sometimes a newly planted church may believe that God has called one of the church planters to remain on as an elder in their church. They should submit this sense of calling to the team and then to the commissioning church for confirmation.

CONCLUSION

As church planters we have found the mutual accountability and support of a team is essential in sustaining the effort and energy necessary in keeping the shoulder to the plow. There have been many times when each of us would have quit without the help of the others. Weekly time together praying and worshiping our Lord, venting steam when frustrated, brainstorming when blocked and seeking counsel when stumbling, and other team activities have been crucial as we till resistant soil, whether in New England, Morocco or Malaysia. We recognize that if we had not been serving on a team we would have dropped out long ago. We cannot emphasize too strongly the importance of church planting teams.

We believe that commissioning authority, team authority, and church authority all exist to hold the church planter accountable and afford him protection in his effort to establish churches. Each authority has limits and, in the event that they may clash, every effort must be made to maintain the unity of the Spirit, that the testimony of Christ not be compromised. If we follow Scriptural guidelines, God will be glorified through the effective extension of His church.

Worksheet:

1.   What is the distinction between commissioning authority, team authority, and church authority?

2.   How is a church planter accountable to his commissioning church?

3.   How does team authority protect the church planter?

4.   What should the church planter's attitude be toward the authority of the local church? In relation to the sending church?

5.   How is the commissioning church responsible to the church planter?

Chapter 2
Scaffolds and Buildings
or
The Difference Between Church Planting Teams and Churches

George Patterson[1] has likened a church planting team to a scaffold which surrounds the structure which is being built, the church. Care must be taken to be sure that the scaffolding is in good shape so that the job can be accomplished. But there is a danger of spending so much time and effort on the scaffolding that the job of building the church is missed. Never loose sight of the goal that the scaffold must be dismantle and removed from the building.

Indeed a major problem of teams operating in pioneer settings it that they spend so much time amongst themselves they end up becoming a church themselves instead of a temporary means to plant the church. For instance one team I visited had begun to set up a Sunday school for their kids, have a regular preaching service, had even begun looking for buildings to meet in! They were hoping to invite nationals to visit and use this as a preaching point. I pointed out that beginning with this model, the nationals would not be satisfied until they had something similar which likely would be decades away since the skills of the team were far beyond what new believers would gain, not to mention that homiletical tools like commentaries which the church planters took for granted were not even existent in this Muslim country! After a while they could see that they were setting up a church of which they would have to be a part for the foreseeable future. This may be a way of planting a church, but is not suitable for a *church planting team* whose authority is *temporary*, and whose ministry must be *itinerant.* And such a church is not likely to reproduce at any rate.

When something like this happens, purpose, function and lines of authority between church and team often become muddled and confused. The church and the team get in each other's way, or become so antagonistic that they can no longer cooperate.   A spirit of co-laboring turns into a spirit of competing. If a team is going to fulfill *its* mandate, and let the church fulfill hers, the team must carefully distinguish its own mandate from the mandate of the church.

This chapter will try to focus on the similarities and differences between church planting teams and churches. How can teams avoid the pitfall of becoming the church and thus missing their call and end up being in competition with the church?

Functions of the Church Which Are Like a Team

---

[1]George Patterson and I corresponded often over several years and he was quite helpful in us developing many of these concepts of reproduction. I owe him a great debt of gratitude for his mentoring of me. For more see Church Multiplication Guide, by Patterson and Scoggins, William Carey Press.

The functions of a healthy church are laid out in scripture. It is to be winning the lost, adding them in to the community through baptism, grounding them in the Faith, discipling them to maturity, disciplining those who turn from the Way, maintaining purity through celebration of the Lords supper, and growing in depth of relationship by following the "one another" commands of the Bible. The church was never meant to be a nominal, safe club for the saints to escape from an ungodly world. Too many churches in the West have become exactly that, serving up programs such as Sunday School, youth groups, singles ministries etc. None of these are bad in themselves but rather they can drain and divert the church of the energy necessary for the major task which is fulfilling the Great Commission by penetrating, leavening their locality with people living out the gospel. These "energy drains" result in the church becoming a weekly meeting of nominal believers, while committed ones move on--often to parachurch organizations who have a vision to "do something"!

The church's main purpose for existing should be evangelism and discipleship which leads to further evangelism (Cf. Mt. 24:14). AThy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven≅ (Mt. 6:10). Our main goal needs to be preparing the world for the second advent of our savior who will come as our reigning King! At that time we will worship him forever and ever. Presently the church has, as part of its task, that of worshiping the King. But we will have eternity to worship. Only now, in this present age, are we able to do the work which will ultimately bring Him back; evangelism and church planting! Too much emphasis has been placed in recent years on meeting "felt needs" of the saints rather than "equipping the saints for the work of the ministry." (Eph. 4:12) The product of transformation ministry (Chapter 3) should be service to others, not being absorbed with our own quest for well being or self-fulfillment! (Galatians 5:13).

A church which is expending its energy "lifting up their eyes and looking unto the fields which are white already for harvest" is much more likely to be multiplying churches in their immediate vicinity (ie. church planting) and sending teams to the uttermost parts of the earth. Every church should have as one of its central goals the reproduction of disciples in ways that will lead to the establishment of new churches. The fact that churches have become ingrown rather than outreaching has led to the proliferation of permanent para-church organizations which enable the churches to continue in their weakened condition of nominal membership and maintenance programs, draining off leadership which could lead them into their true spiritual heritage.

So, we can see that *churches* need to have a vision for reproduction which will lead to planting new churches. In this they are like Church Planting teams.

Functions of the Team That Are Like the Church

Just as there are some ways the church functions like a church planting team, there are also ways in which the team functions like a church. How do the team members get their spiritual needs met where their is no church or the church is very new? Our experience is that is largely through the team! We cannot imagine Paul's team wondering about such a question.

Yet we often find teams which seem unable to imagine how they can walk with the Lord without going to church. To some degree this misunderstanding might arise out of the mistaken concept of *church attendance* as a basic Christian duty. Being a *functioning part of the body* is far different from *church attendance*. Those who are functioning as part of the body will, of course, be assembling with the body if one exists. But attendance at a Sunday meeting does not equal being a contributing part of a Christian community.

If the team is working in an area where there are a number of churches team members will be able to attend meetings without disrupting the function of those existing churches. This is also true if a team is in a foreign country trying to plant national churches but has access to an international church. Nevertheless team members must keep their focus on planting a reproducing church, and then moving on. Beware at getting sidetracked by integrating into the church in such a way that ministries which should be done by the church members end up being done by team members. At most team members should be equipping the saints to minister! Sometimes it may be better for members of the team to avoid involvement with a local church since motives could be misread, insecurities cause a spirit of competition, or pressure be brought on visiting team members to leave their calling to become a ministering part of the church. I have seen missionaries get so involved with the international church that both the team and the church planting effort are largely neglected.

Because of these dangers, and the fact that the team should be the primary community of transformation for its members (see Chapter 3), many activities which are normally associated with church will often be carried out by the team. Group times of prayer, worship, and the Lord's table may be common. This will especially be true of teams ministering cross culturally in places like Turkey. A life of community worship (often in your own language) may be necessary for the members and the children as well. Even if adults feel they can get along without weekly worship, the families will likely suffer without it. We have found even with church planting in our own culture there are times when, for the growth of the church being planted, the church planter and his family need to be absent from the meetings of the church. At these times we often find that a segment of the team needs to meet for worship and celebration of the Lord's table on regular, if impermanent, basis. This may last for a few weeks or even a few months.

In addition to meeting for worship, individual mentoring, discipling and counseling will occur as younger team members need to be trained by the more seasoned veterans. It is not uncommon for marriage counseling, family counseling and other kinds of discipleship to be occurring with team members on our teams. Church Planters and their families have different of stresses than local church members. Older men and women need to help the younger ones cope with the pressures that accompany the spiritual counter attacks of the enemy which are encountered in church planting. The older ones must also lead in exercising Biblical discipline as a follow through of the teams responsibility toward its members (Cf. I Timothy 1:20, 2 Timothy 4:10).

Practically, the men of our teams usually meet weekly for prayer and reporting. Then, we evaluate what is happening and seek God's mind as to how to proceed more creatively. Sometimes we meet

twice each week, once for prayer and the second time for the training. The women will also often meet weekly, although they tend to get together more often and more spontaneously. In addition, there may be times when members meet one on one for personal discipling, counseling, etc. We are quite strict on restricting men to care for men and women to care for women [2]. On teams where the wives and husbands are all on the team (such as is often the case in a cross cultural church plant where the wives may often need a clear sense of call to church planting), team meetings may often include all the members. However, even in these situations, the men will need to meet separately as sort of a proto-eldership group.

Dangers of the Team becoming Church

However, none of these activities make the team a church. A church is much more than a group that carries out these activities. The expectations for a church are far broader and require greater energy than that of a church planting team. A thorough study of the "one another" verses in the New Testament and related verses is necessary to outline all of God's expectations for the church. If the team becomes a church, it will cease to carry out the unique calling to which it was called to start reproducing churches *and move on!*

If the team becomes the church, its focus and purpose will get blurred. As the team becomes permanent rather than transient, it will subvert the call of the local church causing it to stagnate. Worse, the team will develop a competitive spirit with the church. I don't see any evidence in Scripture of apostolic bands permanently staying in one place. God may change the call of a member of the team so that he leaves the team to take up responsibility in local assemblies. When they do so, however, they no longer function in a church planter's call. They are now answering a different call, since the call to church planting is itinerant by nature. One can conjecture from scripture that these kind of things did happen, and we have had that experience on our teams as well.

Thus it is important for a church planter and his family to clearly understand his/her call and the call of the team. It may be appropriate at times to review his/her sense of call as the Lord leads. This should obviously be done seeking confirmation from other members of the team as well as appropriate church leaders, perhaps both of the commissioning church and the church asking him to be elder[3].

So What Is the Difference?

Having stated that many activities of the church may be carried out by the team we might wonder are they any different? The following highlight some of the differences.

Focus of Ministry

---

[2]For more on this see House Church Planting in Networks chapter 17.

[3]Cf. Chapter 1 above.

The main difference is that a church planting team should have as its goal catalyzing a church planting movement. I Corinthians 3:10 points out that the church planter is laying foundations. The members of the church being planted will be the ones who build upon that foundation, finding ways to penetrate their community with the gospel so as to propagate the evangel through reproducing even newer churches.

Therefore, the teams first priority is to focus on areas where there is no local church and thus no reproductive organism. A secondary priority could be to focus on areas where the local churches are not fulfilling the great commission of making disciples by reproducing new congregations (i.e. there is no church planting movement). In this latter case the goal should be not only starting new churches which will reproduce but also influencing the older ones to do the same. The team may also be called to an area where a church has a reproductive model but needs temporary assistance. In this case the church planting team must take great efforts not to usurp the God given authority of the church and do the work for them, but instead remain behind the scenes as a resource and coach to the leaders. It also needs to avoid getting bogged down in a church that may require so much remedial help that it is unable to reproduce. There are other special people who have the wonderful and difficult call of renewing a church. The teams call is to plant the church!

Itinerant and Temporary vs. Local and Permanent

Another key difference between a church and a team is that a team is itinerant in nature. It plants a reproducing church (or church cluster) and then moves on, leaving the church to reproduce and complete the task of evangelizing the area. The team is called to work in an area on a *temporary* basis. God has given it authority to plant the church, and then leave lest by remaining they usurp the authority and call of the local church. The church **must** be entrusted with the task of saturating an entire area for Christ and she will be able to do it far better than a team. For instance the team will often leave large areas of a society unreached. A reproducing church may be begun among say middle class merchants. The church itself will be responsible for working with the poor and figuring out how to plant churches among them as well as the rich. There may be other hidden peoples in the area which will need to be won to Christ and have transforming communities as well.

The team lays the foundation, gets the ball rolling, and the church builds upon it, completing the task (1 Corinthians 3:10-15). We often use a metaphor of an army invading a land. The church planting team invades the land and leaves behind the church which will have the task of subduing the land while the team moves on to invade new territories for the Kingdom.

It is important to note that saturating the local community by the church may be more difficult than planting the first church (or cluster of reproducing house churches). Church planters usually harvest the first gleanings of a ripe, wild field. The church afterward will have to put effort into tilling the soil and penetrating less receptive elements of the population since their calling is to penetrate deeply into their society. They need to be encouraged in this difficult task so they do not lose heart and settle for

maintenance activities inside fortress walls. Church planters need to realize that, as difficult as their task is (especially when working among unreceptive peoples), the church they leave behind will be in for greater difficulties. A simple overview of the letters of Paul will reinforce this truth.

Differences in Evangelistic Focus

A church's task is to penetrate their locality and take all who will come captive for the Lord Jesus Christ. Their evangelistic focus is universal as opposed to the selective focus of the church planting team. The church must try every method to penetrate into every layer of their society.

Further, everyone who responds to the Gospel needs to be given attention and discipled, equipped to engage in the ministry, or disciplined out for not harkening to the voice of the shepherd (Cf. Titus 1:10-16). Everyone is called to work on the building, God's church (I Corinthians 3:10-17). Anyone who is a member of God's church should be part of a local church, and the church must have as its goal to include all who are following the Lord Jesus Christ. As the church continues to grow and disciple men and women into the fullness of Christ including developing new elders and deacons, the church will find herself reproducing[4].

The team's task, however, is to plant a reproducing church. Whereas the church has a responsibility to follow up on all interested persons and find ways to win resistant groups in their locality to the gospel, the team is responsible to follow up only on those people *through whom a church will likely be planted*. It is easy for the adversary to fill the field with tares. The church planter who tries to nurture every shoot that looks like it might bear fruit will likely become exhausted and end up not planting a church. This is one reason we, as a church planting team, have focused on finding and training men of peace. A man (or woman) of peace is a key person with a cohesive social network around them. In the west such people may be PTA leaders, business owners, head of a block association, etc. When such a one comes to Christ usually others in that social network will come as well and a house church can be started very quickly. Seekers are carefully evaluated as to whether or not they would lead us into a social circle and a man or women of peace around whom a church could form[5]. This is a distinctly different focus between church and team as far as evangelism goes.

Differences in Membership

Whereas a church must receive whoever will come, a team must be more selective--receiving only those who are called to be church planters. This will doubtlessly involve the scrutiny of new applicants by the team, trying to discern if their vision, gifting, and calling will help the team fulfill their calling (see Chapter 5 for more on Calling). Even after a person has been received by a team, if

---

[4]This is a mouthful and beyond the scope of this handbook. For detail on planting reproducing churches see House Church Planting in Networks.

[5]For more on the Man of Peace see House Church Planting in Networks

he shows himself to be detrimental to the task, the team should have no qualms about releasing such a one and remanding him back to his sending church. Of course this should be done prayerfully since God may have another plan in using such a one to bring about growth in maturity of the team (more in Chapter 3 Transformation).

Likewise, simply because a person shows up in the locality in which the team is operating and insists that God sent him does not mean the team has the obligation to receive him nor necessarily to cooperate with him (although cooperation is to be encouraged where it does not compromise the call of the team). The team has received a commission from God to plant a church! It is the team=s responsibility to examine the person and determine if indeed he or she is a provision of God to be included in the scaffolding. God may, in his providence, allow many different scaffolds in a single city to bring about his purpose (Cf. Philippians 1:15-18. Here there seems to be tolerance, but limited cooperation.). Once again, the team has the freedom and the responsibility before God to determine membership based their discernment of his/her call from God.
The apostle Paul seems to have had substantial problems with self-proclaimed apostles showing up insisting that God had sent them. Certainly many of them may have been very sincere which only makes them more dangerous. Even some who had been with him and were clearly true believers Paul had no qualms about excluding from the team. This was the very reason behind his schism with Barnabas in Act 15 over John-Mark. I have seen many a team neutralized in the field because they have taken on members who grind the church planting effort to a halt by causing dissension trying to get the team to follow other ministries which will not lead to church planting. Once again, their sincerity only makes it more difficult to see.

Team Members Involvement with Local Churches

Another difference between church and church planting team is the members' involvement with the local church. Team members are usually sent by a local church and thus have some experience with church life. We see this with Paul's team. Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy to mention a few, all came out of local churches. Sending out teams of church planters is the logical extension of the vision of a reproducing church. As it reproduces locally, there will be those who receive a call to go beyond the locality, i.e. become church planters. So normally, church planting teams are produced by churches which are reproducing locally. Just as teams produce churches so churches produce teams. So we see the inherent interdependence and cooperation between the two entities.

But where a local church is beginning, team members need to be careful with their involvement in an emerging assembly. The goal is to have a *reproducing* church which means that it must have local leadership who can train up new leaders as well (2 Timothy 2:2). Obviously if you have a team of church planters (e.g. three or four couples) working with only two local couples who are beginning to meet as a church, it would not be healthy for the whole church planting team to be involved in such an assembly. If three mature couples from the team get involved, the locals will be passive and not step out to develop their spiritual gifts, especially those in leading and shepherding. Thus the goal of reproduction will be hindered.

It is better for only one of the church planting team couples to meet with the other two couples. The rest of the team carries on as before this new church began meeting. They will continue with a team life which will include worship, prayer, the Lord's table, etc. The couple working with the emerging church may also desire to remain a part of the team corporate worship life so as not to become too dependent on the church.

Conclusion:

There are many pitfalls to avoid as we try to keep the call of church and team distinct. However, attaining this goal will allow both church and church planting team to prosper. Failure will result in competition, resentment and inability to reproduce as either the church dominates the team, the team dominates the church, or the team gets absorbed in the church.

Worksheet:

1. What is your team life like? What elements of the church do you need to include to meet the spiritual needs of the members of your team? How may that have to change as you plant churches?

2. Are you evaluating your evangelistic contacts to determine whether or not they are leading you to people of peace? Are your converts doing evangelism with their friends and family? How can you better equip them for this ministry without taking over for them?

3. Once the church is planted, in what ways can you assist her in the hard work of evangelizing in such a way that the church will reproduce? Where will you have to be careful in order not to rob her of her responsibility and blessing?

Chapter 3
The Ministry of Transformation

This chapter will address the critical area of the place of the team and church in the ongoing transformation of character of a team member. This is related to the importance of teams so it appears here rather than after we have gone into how teams are formed and function.

Transformational ministry is a central responsibility of the church toward its members. Many activities of the church have this in view such as the Lord's supper (I Corinthians 10,11), shepherding/discipling (Acts 20:17-34), and church discipline (Matthew 18:15-21). Indeed the lack of understanding of this transforming ministry of the church is one of the major factors keeping the western church impotent in our age. The team will need to have expertise in these areas as well[6]. Our experience is that we as team members are also being transformed in our pilgrimage through the community of the team. We are not perfect, but rather in process ourselves. Team members are at times engaged in being shepherded in the area of marriage, family, interpersonal conflict, areas of personal failing, etc. This includes the team leader who is not above these things. In fact, team leaders will be under more pressure from the responsibility of leadership. Attacks from the evil one are likely to unveil wounds and scars arising out of sin, either ones he committed, or ones committed against him, which may be hidden in many other contexts (Cf. Acts 20:28-31). Indeed, as someone has been said "God is more interested in the work He is doing in you than the work He is doing through you". Being a leader of team should profoundly transform the leader.

The team must see that one of its main tasks is being a community through which its members can be healed of the effects of sin and grow deeper in patterns of righteousness as the team members use the word to "teach, reprove, correct and train in righteousness" (2 Tim 3:16f). If it is effective at this then it will likely be effective at passing this legacy on to the churches that it plants. The converse is also unfortunately true.

Many team leaders I have talked to presume that all team members should be fully mature and low maintenance before they can be on a team. My experience is that as long as teams are made up of people they will need to grow and will require time and experience. My wife likes to say about finding team mates that Ayou have to kiss a few frogs to find a prince≅. It is also true that if a team leader is going to be effective at leading a diverse group of people in the complex and challenging task of church planting that he needs to see the prince in every frog! It is only as he sees each team member as God sees them, and the provision that they are from God to the team to accomplish the purpose, that the team leader will likely persevere in the ministry of transformation that will be necessary for each team member (including him!).

---

[6] For more information on transformational ministry please see my book <u>Transformational Ministry</u> available through the Fellowship of Church Planters or Frontiers.

The Transformation Plan

A careful study of II Corinthians 3 & 4 and Ephesians 4-6 reveals that one of the central plans of God for the Christian community is the transformation of the character of our individual members. The measurable product of transformation is unity as individuals put off the old, selfish man and put on the new man motivated by love (Cf. Ephesians 4:1-3,17-24). Paul reveals practically how this is done in Ephesians 4-6:

1. 4:1-3 states God's desired walk for the believer.
2. 4:4-11: focuses on the provisions of God to bring about unity through love.
3. 4:12-16 on the central place of the Christian community in this process.
4. 4:17-24 gives an overview of the requirement for transformation, namely the putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new.
5. From 4:25 to 6:9 Paul focuses on the practical nuts and bolts of working this out.
6. The book closes with the a look at the opposition we can expect in the spiritual realm.

Everyone who is born again still has areas in their character which are deficient with respect to Godliness (Romans 5:3-5). These areas of carnality inhibit us from effectively serving others according to God's standards of love. Instead we often revert to serving ourselves at the expense of others (Galatians 5:13). These patterns of self- love and self-protection go very deep, and are often hidden so that we often aren't even conscious of them (Cf. Romans 7:7-25). Therefore, we need a community which can bring these patterns to light. In the community we need mature believers (Galatians 6:1) who can show us how to crucify the flesh (repentance), that we might develop new life-patterns which reflect God's perfect love. This community will need to hold us accountable for the difficult task of being trained in righteousness (new life patterns).

This process of renewal (Ephesians 4:20-24) is usually threatening and embarrassing because it reveals our ingrained fleshly responses (Galatians 5:16,17). It requires loving attention and often even pressure by mature believers as well as by a loving community (eg. Matthew 18:15-21, I Corinthians 5). The former, individual attention we often call discipleship, the latter, community attention we often call discipline. They are both necessary, loving provisions of God for His great reclamation plan for His church (Ephesians 5:25-27).

The Vehicle for Transformation of church planters: <u>*The Team*</u>

A church planting team must be conscious of God's purposes for it as a team in bringing about the transformation of its members. One might think that teams of church planters should be mature and beyond the need of ministering to itself this way. Yet evan a cursory glance at Scripture (Cf. Phil 3, Romans 7, and verses below) will show that this transformational ministry goes on for the rest of our lives. There is no maturity short of going to glory which graduates us beyond this ministry (Romans 8:23). Even leaders are exhorted to shepherd each other, lest sinful character deficiencies lead to

---

destruction (Cf. Acts 20:28-30, I Timothy 5:19,20).

The team will need to practice certain church activities which aid in this transformation such as the Lord's table, personal mentoring/discipling, discipline (Cf. I Timothy 1:20, I Corinthians 5:5).   A team will likely need to be flexible and sensitive as to what aspects of community God desires it to be practicing in order to bring about the transformation of its members. This will be covered more completely in Chapter 4. But we have had times when the team life is minimal when working in our own culture. For instance, the team has often not met for worship as a team, or the Lord's table, or instruction from the word. These needs have been met by the churches in which we were laboring. So team life in this situation was more meeting for prayer, and training. There were times of conflict and confrontation which were essential to the transformation process. At those times, we met as a team for worship, the Lord's table, prayer, and instruction, basically doing all the essential elements that a church does in order to see its members transformed (Cf. Acts 2:42).

 In the case of a team working cross-culturally, the team will likely have the predominant role in transformational ministry to its members. Great opportunities will arise as workers living in a cross culture situation are guaranteed that all sorts of carnal, self-serving, survival attitudes and behavior (as opposed to loving one another) will be exposed. We should not be surprised when these arise.

In the case of a team is working in an area where there is no church at all, the team *itself* will be the community bringing transformation. Once a church comes into existence it will certainly contribute to the transformation of the church planter involved in planting the church. The body life of the church and the challenges inherent in discipling new believers and leaders will bring to light areas of character in the church planter which will need transformation. But it will likely be the more mature members of the team who will be the ones to bring these team members through the patterns of repentance and training in righteousness leading to that transformation. In a pioneer, cross-cultural situation, I think it likely that the team will always have the prominent place in transformational ministry to its members.

We are careful that the ministry of transformation which is intense, personal and often even intimate is done man to man and women to woman. The mature women on the team will shepherd and care for the wives and other single women on the team (Titus 2: 3ff) and the men will care for the men [7]. This is a crucial role for women to play on the whole team since women are far better than men at recognizing interpersonal problems. Usually the the wives are the first to bring family, maritial and community problems to the attention of the team.

If the team members are not helping one another "be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect" I think it unlikely that an apostolic band exists in the Biblical sense. Instead it is something more akin to a church group (eg. Sunday School class, mission committee, soup kitchen), where people may be together but are not intimately involved in each others life. In this case the "team" should recognize

---

[7] see House Church Planting in Networks, Chapter 17 for more on women leaders.

that the spiritual growth of its members will be determined by its involvement in the church and be certain that the members are attached sufficiently to the church for the ministry of transformation to occur.

Avoiding Being Consumed by Transformational Ministry

As teams receive new members in various stages of maturity, different ones will require different amounts of attention. Some may be so immature that they can disrupt the momentum of the team and prevent them from fulfilling their God-given call of planting the church. If such people are prematurely allowed to join the team, much disruption will occur. Problems affect other team members and often consume months. The fallout after releasing such a person from the team can last additional months as the team comes under scrutiny from the sending organization, the member's church, and the churches which are being planted. We have found that the result is that momentum toward church planting if often arrested from such trouble. For this reason we often use internships of from 6 months to a year as a trial for new ones on an already existing team.

If a team is adding new members on a regular basis, the team leader can presume that they will come with differing levels of maturity. All will require some shepherding attention in order to become effective church planters. If the team is larger than 6-8 adults, almost all the team leaders time may be consumed merely keeping up with the community life of the team. Our experience is that a team with five or six couples demands most of the team leader's time. He will have little time left over to plant churches.

One way to alleviate this problem of adding new members to a team (of say 4 couples) is to have the team divide into smaller sub-teams of two seasoned couples each. One of the members can serve as the sub-team leader. New church planters would be added to the sub team one person or couple at a time to minimize unnecessary disruption. Discipleship chains[8] could be set up on the sub-team (man to man, woman to woman) so that the new member(s) could be observed in action. Problems can be dealt with by the mature believer as they are revealed.

As problems are uncovered, they are not resolved in a "sterile" counseling environment, but rather in the daily life of serving the team members while carrying out church planting activities. If discipline becomes necessary, it is done in a loving context of relationship, affecting primarily the sub-team and not disrupting the entire team. Even with a team of 4 couples which has no new members on the horizon we often go to "accountability partners" so that the necessary close up care is available. The team leader can be summoned when problems come up where there is resistance to transformation. We have seen potential problems such as marital strife, lust, bitterness, child rearing and other family problems, etc. dealt with on a regular basis using such procedures. Needless to say many leaders are not cared for in this way and often pay a high price later in life, not to mention violating Acts 20:28!

---

[8]for more on discipleship chains see <u>House Church Planting in Networks</u> Chapter 15

Another advantage of the sub-team approach is that people other than the team leader are learning how to be effective in the ministry of transformation. These skills are essential for the church planter if they are going to be transferred into the churches. Since this is a fundamental ministry of the church, it needs to be a fundamental skill learned by church planters. Where better to learn it than on the team, especially if these skills were not mastered while in their sending churches. As sub-team leaders prove their effectiveness and new recruits are added this would be a normal way for teams to reproduce effectively.

In a chapter 6 we will talk about how teams who are accustomed to functioning in the above way can reproduce and form effective and flexible networks of teams. The different teams can each focus on a particular geographical area, people group, or socio-economic group, or use different strategies and tactics to reach the same group of people.   As such, a network of teams would function much like several research teams trying to find the solution to how to plant reproducing churches. What one team learns can be shared with other teams.

Worksheet:

1. What transformational ministry are you involved in with your team? Make a list of each team member or family on your team. Evaluate each one in their walk with the Lord. Where are they struggling? What steps are being taken to help those who are struggling? What progress is being made? How are you tracking their progress? If you cannot answer these questions, what do you need to do to get the answers?

2. What communities are involved in your members being transformed? Which responsibilities belong to the team (as a whole and which belongs to an older man/woman discipler)? Which belongs to the church (sending church, church which is being planted)? Which belongs in the family?

3. Who are your most mature team members in terms of being transformed? How are you using them with newer members of the team? How could you use them better?

4. Women are perhaps the most crucial element in bringing effective transformational ministry to the team and the church. Which women on your team are effective at this ministry? How are they being used in shepherding other women? What avenues of communication are available between the women and you (the TL) so that problems on the team or in marriages can come to light? If there are no clear avenues, then gossip will certainly fill the gap.

Section II

Forming Teams

Chapter 4
Forming Church Planting Teams

You may be reading this Handbook as someone who has an interest in church planting, but no team. In that case, you might be wondering how do I pull a team together? This chapter will relate our experience and give suggestions from those we have worked with. The reader should note that the goal of forming a team is not to get an administrative structure, but rather to build relationships and ministry skills which will lead to effective church planting.

In this chapter we will relate our experience in establishing the Fellowship of Church Planters (FCP) believing that the practical case history will be more helpful than theory. The events cover 15 years, although the actual forming of the first team took a little over a year. Some practical appendices are given at the end of the manual which we have used helping others to forming effective teams. These helps were developed with the first team and the ensuing teams. The hope is that they will help you take less time to start a team. You may find as you read that you have come a good distance already.

If you absorb the principles in the previous three chapters, you may become frustrated at how difficult it is to get an effective team functioning. But beware of taking short cuts, as they may prevent the kind of team from forming which will be effective and starting reproducing churches. "A student when he is fully trained will be like his teacher." Luke 6:40. You can only produce what you are! It takes a community (team) to plant a community (church).

Beginnings

When the FCP began in 1986, it consisted of only Jim Frost and myself. We were both married for over 10 years and each had two children. Our wives, though supportive of our call to church planting, did not sense such a call for themselves. They felt their main ministry was to us as husbands and their children. Each of them, some years later, received a call from the Lord to be actively engaged in the ministry of church planting and were commissioned to the team from our (Jim and my) sending churches.

By detailing how the Lord led us together to be a team might be helpful for you to sense how God may have already prepared you for this task of forming a team.

I had been involved in the planting of two churches from 1975-81, but the idea of a church planting team had not even entered my mind! The first church, Cranston Christian Fellowship (CCF), was started shortly after I came to Christ, so I was involved from its inception. CCF was started by 65 people sent off from Quidnessett Baptist Church (QBC). Harold Burchette, the pastor of QBC had a vision for churches planting churches and set up a training institute at QBC to train the future leaders of these new churches. Dave Gadoury had been trained by Harold and headed up the new work. Dave trained several men for eldership at CCF.

I had only been saved for about a year through the witness of one of the members of QBC when CCF started. I had been personally discipled by one of the CCF deacons (Russ) who was one of the elders Dave was training. Russ focused heavily on the transformational issues I mentioned in the last chapter. This was necessary since I was quite a bitter person and a hermit. Russ asked me to help lead an evangelistic Bible study with him in one of the neighborhoods. I did studies with the young people in the gospels while Russ worked with the adults. We simply studied a few verses, asked questions about what it said about Jesus and what that had to do with us. Over 50 people came to Christ through that study which lasted about 2 years. That was the beginning of my "on the job" training. I watched Russ as he worked with people and learned how to present the gospel in a variety of situations. I also watched him deal with questions people had about church, baptism, etc. all which he answered from the word.

I became effective at this and began new studies as part of a visitation team that went out one night a week to follow up possible contacts. The goal of the visits was to start new evangelistic studies, the fruit of which would ultimately be added to CCF. The church grew from about 60 in 1975 to over 300 in 1981. Almost all this growth was from people coming to Christ through these studies. During this time I was a full time school teacher at a secular, inner city high school.

In late 1975 I was asked by a student at Brown University where I had been a football coach to lead a study in his dorm room. We used the same simple Bible study approach I was using in the neighborhoods. Dozens of students came to Christ over the next 5 years. Just as Russ worked with me, I would work with them one on one, dealing with questions about the Lord, the church, personal victory over sin, etc. I learned to use the Word to deal with these fundamental questions. Also many of the students had deeper problems and I helped them using the Word even as Russ had helped me. Often I went to Dave Gadoury who had much more experience and training than either Russ or I. Cathy, my wife, got involved discipling troubled women students. As Russ did with me, once these new believers began to learn how to overcome the effects of sin in their life, I would thrust them into responsibility for newer souls. They could evangelize, shepherd new believer, answer reservations they had regarding baptism and church membership, lead Bible studies, etc. I would coach them as they needed help. Ultimately I trained others to take over the entire campus work.

In 1978 I became a deacon and later (1980) and elder at CCF. In 1979 Jim Frost came to Christ and I was involved in grounding him in the faith and encouraging him to start evangelistic Bible studies in his home. This relationship continued through the next chapter of my life which took me out of CCF.

My first effort

In 1981 I was sent out from CCF along with 50 other members to start the Warwick Christian Fellowship (WCF). I left my teaching job and became a supported pastor. Jim remained an active member of CCF and a high school teacher. Our families continued to meet monthly even though we were involved in different churches. As the pastor of the new church I was involved in every aspect of church life, but especially recognizing and training leadership which would eventually be

responsible for the church. I was deeply involved in the lives of these future leaders, their marriages and their families. It was in this context I learned much about transformational ministry.

However, I became persuaded that a plural leadership model was crucial to the ongoing welfare of the leaders and the church. I had started WCF as *the* pastor and, although I was persuaded about plural eldership, I had not modeled it. I became persuaded that one needed to model plural leadership from the beginning of the church planting process. In studying the scripture, and consulting with older leaders from our network of churches, I became persuaded that a church planting team was the appropriate vehicle to plant church which would be led by teams of men. WCF commissioned me to start a church planting team at the end of 1985. I exited the church, turning over responsibility to the elders I had trained.

Starting the Team

I had been talking with Jim Frost over the years about planting a church together. He was burdened to plant a church in his home town of Cumberland, Rhode Island, where he had been running evangelistic Bible studies for some years, mostly from the contacts he hd made as a school teacher. Jim approached the eldership of CCF requesting that he be sent with me to a church planting effort in his own town. The church commissioned him and we became a team of two church planters. We called our team The Fellowship of Church Planters (FCP). We wrote up a covenant that would regulate our relationship with one another and our sending churches and set off to plant churches. (See Appendix 2: Guidelines for developing a Covenant of Team Understandings.). Although it cooperated with the local churches we had planted, it operated with independence and freedom from control of them. The reasons for this were set out in Chapter 1 which is a rewrite of the first paper I ever wrote on church planting (On relationship of the church planter to other churches).

FCP=s first effort at church planting started in Jim's home. We determined that Jim should head up the work since those involved had been gathered by him. My task was to train Jim from behind the scenes in everything I knew. Jim was faithful in requesting me to write position papers on various things I had learned as well as outline Bible studies which I had put together over the years for discipleship and leadership training. The result of this was the manual for House Church Planting in Networks, as well as the Leadership Training Guide[9] which consists of the different Bible studies developed over the years to answer the questions new believers had as well as train older believers in things like transformational ministry.

Over the ensuing years, new church planters were added to the FCP team. We began to experiment with house churches which we felt would reproduce far more easily than the large churches we had planted. As team leader, I was responsible for training each of the new church planters.   Jim's requirement of me to write out the training materials paid great dividends, this book being one of them! I was able to keep my hands in the day-to-day responsibility of church planting, but usually

---

[9] These are available through our web site at www.fcpt.org

from a position behind the scenes much as Russ had trained me. The materials I had developed and used to train Jim enabled me to "coach" new church planters more effectively. This intentional coaching enabled the new church planters to learn by experience much more quickly than Jim. I had trained Jim using from trial and error, but we constantly evaluated our work and tried to improve upon the training with every new member.

Developing methods for training of church planters led to the team reproducing and interns coming from other parts of the U.S.A. and the world for periods of intense training. Chapter 11 outlines the result which we now call a church planting development center.

Patterns for Team Formation

1. Our experience is that church planters normally emerge from strong reproducing churches. They usually receive an internal subjective call (See chapter 5) to church planting which is confirmed externally by objective means, normally the leaders and congregations of the church in which they serve. This seems to be the norm in scripture as well (Cf. Paul, Barnabas, Timothy, Silas, etc.)

2. Often one man will be the visionary recruiter whom others join in forming a team as I did with Jim (Barnabas did the same with Paul in Acts 11). He will often function as the initial team leader although this may change over time (as it seemed to with Paul and Barnabas in Acts 14). Jim eventually became the team leader and I was on his team. Jim was ready for that and with my traveling and coaching other teams it was apparent I could no give the necessary continuity to the team as its leader.

3. The visionary leader may draw up a team covenant and understandings as to how the team will function as well as a brief strategy. I had outlined this in preparation for being sent off to start the team. I did talk to Jim often about this as I had already been recruiting him. It is helpful to set some expectation for what a team is and what it will do when recruiting a team since it gives a vision which team members often need. In Jim's and my case we became the team first and then fleshed out a covenant. The strategy came later through trial and error.(See 2, 3 and 4 for helpful guidelines for writing covenants and strategy papers).

4. New team leaders will often arise from the original team as new sub teams are formed (see the previous chapter) and will recruit new members either from the original churches or from newly forming churches.

The above represent the normal ways we have formed teams, however we have observed team members recruited and teams form in other ways as well. Below recounts some of these.

Other Patterns

1. New team members may join the team although they have not been a part of a church (Cf. Luke,

Priscilla and Aquilla, etc.). In this case their calling is confirmed by an already exiting team. For instance Paul likely picked up Luke in Troas and, recognizing his value, he joined the team. The team did not wait for a church to commission him. This also seems to be what happened with Priscilla and Aquilla who were picked up in Corinth before there was any church there. They functioned with the team before they functioned with the church.

2. Or Teams may emerge more or less spontaneously by a couple of committed believers receiving a call directly from the Lord to form a team even though they have no church planting experience. In this case they should be quite mature men and humble themselves by getting all the help they can find (including a church planting mentor if possible). This is most likely to happen on a college campus, or in cases where a person has moved to a new area and finds no suitable church[10]. In any case team members should make every effort to have the calling confirmed by others, either another church planting team, a mentor, or a church. Otherwise they might fall into the trap of commending themselves (II Corinthians 13:12ff). We encourage members of such "spontaneous teams" to start the first church and then ask that church to send them off a team. This avoids the problem of "commending themselves".

3. Team members of an existing team may get a call to go to a different city or country and recruit members from their own team or other teams with whom they have a relationship (with the confirmation and encouragement of the teams leader of course, who should always looking to foster reproduction). Sometimes the new team leader may go early to the new area to make preparation for the rest of the team with other members following usually within a year. Future members would remain part of existing teams until they leave for the new team. This is often the preferred way when teams are going to another culture and where a different language is spoken. This will enable to future team leader to serve the rest of the team by enabling him (and his wife) to make the cultural and language adjustment first so that they can help the new team members through the transitions.

Conclusion

Normally, teams form by individuals in a growing church receiving a call from the Lord to church planting and having that call confirmed by the church.

You may have noticed that we have not addressed the issue of finances. We believe that a calling to plant churches has little to do with how Go d chooses to put food on your table. Almost all of our (FC)) church planters hold regular jobs which fully meet their needs. Often these jobs carry them to new places where new teams will form and thus new churches get planted. We encourage teams to look to the Lord to determine if any on the team needs to be financially underwritten, but the biblical

---

[10]The term "suitable church" needs to be carefully defined. Often people would define it as one that is comfortable or meets my needs. This make the criterion quite self-centered. Once definition of suitable church is: A church which is trying to follow Christ by carrying out all the commandments for His church and where we can serve God in building His Kingdom.

norm is that most church planters should be tentmakers (Cf. Acts 20:34).

Part the reason for this conviction is that we plant house churches which normally do not have supported pastors or church staff. The leaders must balance the responsibility of job, family and ministry. A self-supporting church planter is a far better example to these. The principle of unpaid shepherds (pastors) also leads more rapidly to reproducing churches and teams because finances are one of the more severe bottlenecks to reproduction. By keeping supported church planters and elders to a bare minimum, a key obstacle to reproduction can be eliminated.

A word about "full time ministry". We do not believe that the Bible teaches what is sometimes referred to as a *call* to "full time ministry". Certainly there is no evidence that the New Testament viewed supported people as having a superior call over those who labored with their hands. There were times when Paul and his team were supported by the offerings of the saints and there were times when they worked with their hands. "The laborer is worthy of his hire" and believers may often share financially with those who teach and have labored among them. And this is appropriate. But the idea of a professionally trained and fully supported clergy is far from New Testament scripture. Often church planters will derive some or all the their finances through "working with their own hands". In closed countries bi-vocational ministry is often the only option. For more on this issue of finances see Appendices 1 and 5.

Some church planters will not be able to hold a job because they will be called to a largely itinerant minisry. This will likely be true of a mentor of several church planting teams and even some team leaders. But in this case they need to look to the Lord for their provision and should always consider that one of the ways He would supply is by engaging in gainful, though flexible, employment. Paul made tents when the Lord did not supply by the free will offerings of the saints. All our church planters are expected to have skills which will enable them to get a job if the need arises.

In the next chapter we look at the differences between teams and churches.

Worksheet

1. If you are part of a church planting team, how was it formed?

2. If you desire to start a church planting team but do not have one yet, who has God placed in your life who might have a similar burden? Begin praying daily for potential team members.

3. Who has God placed in your church or brought to your attention who might have gifts which could be used in church planting?

4. How could you begin to test whether the Lord might call you together to form a team? (Be certain that you seek confirmation of those the Lord has placed as leaders in their church!)

5. Have you witnessed the establishment of other teams? If so, then describe them. What are the key steps which enabled this to happen? Outline steps you need to take? How might you need help? Who could help you with this?

6. If your church has not reproduced itself why not? What ministries may be lacking? How could a team help your church fulfill its responsibility for the great commission? What are your leaders doing about these things? What responsibility do you have to help? How do you see what God is putting on your heart fitting in with your church's vision?

7. Form a triad with two church leaders to discuss and pray about forming a new team and what the next steps should be.

Chapter 5
The Calling of a Church Planter

I believe God's callings are dynamic and not static. That is, I believe that God's calling on a person may change throughout his life. I was called to the ministry of church planting, but I was first called to be a pastor. Likewise some of the best pastors I know planted the church but now have settled into the pastoral call in that same church. Now that I am a church planter, is it possible that God could call me to return to ministering as an elder? I believe He could. He is the my Lord and Master, and I serve at His bidding. He knows where I need to be and what I need to do in order to accomplish His purposes in building His Kingdom far better than me. My desire needs to be like Paul in Philippians 3:12-14.

A team leader ought to have worked through his own calling. But he will be required to evaluate the calling of prospective team members as they apply to the team. The members will also be required to review their callings while on the team. So the team leader needs to be well acquainted with the issues of concerning calling.

The problem of evaluating calling is complicated once one realizes the close connection between church planting in an itinerant fashion and church reproduction from pastoral perspective. Chapter 3 on the similarities between church and team hinted at this. A careful look at Paul=s summary of his ministry in Ephesus found in Acts 20:17-38 reveals tremendous levels of pastoral ministry. Church Planters who think that planting a church is a matter of quick evangelism followed by organizing the group and then leaving are taking a very superficial view of church planting (For more on a comprehensive approach to church planting see my book House Church Planting in Networks.).

Often team members *will* struggle with whether they are called to be itinerant church planters, or remain as elders, especially immediately after they have birthed their first church. This may be less of a problem when one is planting a church cross culturally, but I have still found it common for a cross cultural church planter to become confused and conflicted about their calling often due to strong paternal instincts which arise after experiencing the birth of a new church (and these feelings are not bad!). They often wish to remain in the newly planted church long enough to establish the church thoroughly. Like the parent who is never ready to let the child leave home, the church never quite gets there and the church planter evolves into a solo pastor of the church or at best a hub in the wheel of the church. This has two negative effects: the church planter effectively leaves his calling, and the elders God has appointed never get raised u! I am not saying that a church planter cannot or should not ever leave the ministry of church planting. But it should be done so as a call from God not as a default from getting bogged down in the ministry because he has lost sight of his calling!

This chapter will focus on *how one can distinguish between these callings of church planter and elder*. This is very important since a church planter must constantly work to avoid becoming fixed in pastoral ministry as a hub to the work if he is called to the itinerant ministry of church planting. Likewise he must recognize when God changes the call from being a itinerant church planter to being

an elder and ext the team.   As a team leader you will need to make certain that your team members are clear in their call and likewise help them at times when they are confused as to whether God is changing their call. You will need to hold your teammates with an open hand knowing that their call is from God and not from the team leader! I encourage you to look at appendix 6 for a Bible study we use to help evaluate and review calling.

Since there are many similarities between the ministry of pastoring and church planting, it is easy to get confused over our call. This is compounded by the fact that I think it likely that a person's call can change several times in the course of his life. Tradition has it that Timothy finally did settle down to pastoral ministry in Ephesus--although when Paul wrote him his two letters Paul was writing him as a church planter, not a pastor. Peter was writing as a fellow elder in his first letter (I Peter 5:1).

We encourage those serving with the team to reexamine their calling as more light is shed on their life and ministry. Often this reexamination comes at a time of family crisis, personal upheaval, or other circumstances which may dictate a change is appropriate. One of my close friends has had to review his church planting call several times in light of their child who was born with cystic fibrosis while on a field where such a child could be expected to live only a couple of years due to the lack of available care and hostile environment. Such examination is usually a time of carefully evaluating the deep, often hidden motives of the heart (Cf. I Corinthians 3:10-4:5). In such situations we on the team can pray, asking for more illumination and asking soul searching questions, but we cannot take the place of God in issuing the call or changing the call. AUnto his own master he stands or falls...≅Romans 14:4. We cannot not judge ones who go through such a difficult valley of decision because God has given us each different levels of faith, conviction, and calling. Circumstances which might cause one person or couple to review their calling not have any affect on another. So at such times we must pray and be supportive of God=s leading.

The Difference in Call

What is the difference in the call to plant churches as opposed to pastoring a reproducing church? One difference may be what is often referred to as "burden". A pastor is burdened to shepherd sheep. He wants to care for them from cradle to grave. Often a person who feels a burden to plant churches finds the church planting burden evaporate after he has planted his first church. Once planted, he desires to see it brought to all the fullness of Christ, "warning every man and teaching every man until every man becomes mature in Christ" (Colossians 1:29) . Thus his burden and focus narrows to a pastoral role. Obviously he needs to carefully weigh his motives since, for some, this desire may from carnal motives (looking good, not wanting the church to fail, being safe, etc). But this burden, if pure, is reflective of one who is called as a shepherd and he should likely remain in that church. This change in call will normally be confirmed by both his team and his sending church. Often such a person may be an Ephesians 4:11 type elder who will reproduce many elders and new churches.

The church planter, on the other hand, also loves sheep and desires to see them come to maturity, but his driving force and joy is *equipping leaders* to serve as shepherds (elders) to serve the flock.

(Church planters must beware of carnal motives which will tempt them to leave too early before the church is able to weather the storms ahead; motives like being easily frustrated, looking to greener pastures, wanting to only work with Areally committed≅--read Aeasy to work with people, etc.) Whereas some shepherds should also reproduce in the natural course of shepherding the church, for the church planter, producing leaders is the primary goal of his ministry. He is always on the lookout for prospective leaders. He rejoices as they progress in answering the call of God to take responsibility for the flock. In a lot of ways this aspect of church planting is like a father who needs to let his sons become independent and leave home. He must constantly look to decrease, while those he trains must increase. But any father who loves his kids knows how hard this is to do! The church planter is first and foremost a trainer of leaders, for without leaders the church will collapse after he leaves.

So it follows that one indicator of a church planter's call is usually "itchy feet". There is usually a sense that there are new places to go, new people to win, new people to train. He will find himself wondering what surprises and challenges the next group of people will bring. Who will be the next leaders? He doesn't think so much "church" as "churches".

We need to reinforce the idea that the calling of church planter is itinerant by nature, even though he may work in a small geographical area. Many church planters will never leave one large city their entire life and ministry. But he will be moving on from group to group, as he finishes one, he moves onto the next. He is a pioneer, not a pillar. He is always in transition. And difficult as that is, he recognizes how it suits him. If he is married he obviously needs a very special wife especially if she is not called to be a church planter[11]!

The calling of the wife

We are often questioned about the call of a wife. As mentioned above we do not believe that a wife and husband need to be called together as church planters. We believe it is possible that a she may be called to be his wife and not actively participate as a church planter. My wife was not called to join me actively in church planting for several years. She would function as a member in whatever church I was laboring in and usually remain behind (to train women which was her gift) as I would move on to open a new work. We were in the same geographic region so I was not gone from home for long periods of time. As a new church would come together, Cathy would join me with the children once the group was conducting regular Sunday meetings. Normally, she would be remain in the previous

---

[11]For family reasons he may not keep moving his home or children's school. I lived in the same house in RI for 18 years before moving to England, but planted 8 churches in pretty broad geographic area.

church for 3-6 months before joining me. This gave stability to the family. Later, she also experienced a call to church planting and was formally commissioned to join the team.

Each member of our team works out how to include their families according to the pattern or life-style that God has designed for them. For instance Jim Frost's wife has always traveled with him even in the earliest gathering stages of a new work. But they had older children who remained in the first church they planted. This simplified things a great deal. The team recognizes the responsibility and freedom that each couple has before the Lord to wrestle through these issues and come to their own convictions. But any change in calling should have at least as much confirmation as his/her initial call (see appendix 6 for more on confirmation).

Usually, however, if the couple is called to leave home and family to plant churches cross culturally both the wife and husband need to experience a pretty clear call from God to such ministry.

Conclusion

Because the *ministry* church planting may often be so similar to pastoral ministry, it is easy to sense confusion in one=s call at different stages in ones life. If this is not resolved the church planter will often become the hub of a new church plant preventing new elders from rising up and circumventing his own call. For this reason the team will often need to clarify and review the calling a team member (or even the leader), or else the work will grind to a halt. This review should be done in light of God=s word, previous confirmation and new data. If any change in calling is indicated this should be confirmed by the team as well as the commissioning church.

Worksheet:

1. How settled are you on your call? How has your call been confirmed? What questions have you had about it? What people have you sought out to help you as you sought to clarify your call?

2. To what is your wife called? What tension has this brought? How have you worked through them?

3. Evaluate each member of your team. How settled is each they on his/her call? How has his/her call been confirmed? Have you confirmed their call?

4. In the event one team member is questioning his/her call have those who confirmed the call originally confirmed the change in call? How should the team be involved in confirming a change in calling?

5. Are the wives clear and at peace re: their call? Are the family tensions worked through? Have the

older women on the team who have worked through their call helped the younger women with this?

Chapter 6
Finances and the Church Planter

This paper is written taken from the guidelines written for the Fellowship of Church Planters regarding support of church planters and oversight of the finances given to the team. It is probably not relevant to teams serving with existing mission organizations. But it will be helpful to any Aindependent teams≅, and could be very helpful to national teams which may emerge in unreached countries who may not want to be under a western missionary umbrella.

I.   TEAM FINANCIAL SET-UP

Most church planters serving with the team are "tent-makers". They function as church planters while holding a secular job. The team is responsible to make up a budget for each year. A copy is sent to all supporting churches and individuals, as well as to anyone else who requests a copy. Non-supported church planters determine the need of supported church planters. We use as a benchmark for supported church planters the salary of a public school teacher. A non-member of the team serves as the treasurer and financial secretary. She is responsible for all deposits, writing of all checks, and financial reporting of the team. No person on the team is able to write checks, although expenditures must be cleared by the team leader. A person outside of the team handling the finances guards the team from potential misuse of appropriated funds and misinterpretations from outside sources. Our books are audited by an outside auditor each year.

The Fellowship of Church Planters is a "faith mission". We believe that the God who has called us to this ministry will provide the necessary finances to carry out His work. The problem of financial support for the church planting team is a spiritual problem just as it was for the Apostle Paul and his team. Just as they went forth in faith, so also we go forward in faith. If our faith is in God, then it is His responsibility to meet our needs. If our dependence is upon man, then our hope is in something that can fail. If our faith is in the Lord, then our hope is in the One who never fails. If the Lord so leads, each supported member of the team is ready to work in a secular job to meet their personal, financial needs while continuing full involvement with the work.   For most that will be the normal way the Lord provides for our needs. For all (supported or self-supporting) their "vocation" (calling) is to church planting.

II.   GOD'S PROVISIONS

The Lord is meeting our financial needs in three ways:

First they are met by local, participating churches. We find in Philippians 4:15-20 that the local assembly at Philippi helped Paul this way. After the apostles had labored in Macedonia (including in the city of Philippi),they left for Thessalonica. The church at Philippi continued to send gifts to them. From the letter to the Philippians, we know that while Paul was in Macedonia and Thessalonica, his supplies came from Philippi. Without this support, Paul's work in this area would have been very

limited. Paul did not request financial support from them (vs 17 "not that I seek the gift") but was praising God for this "fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God" that was "credited to their account". They had become partners with Paul in participating in the other works as they supported him.

Paul desired not to become a financial burden to any of the churches. Twice it is recorded that Paul asked the churches to pray for him that he might be enabled for the work, kept faithful and protected from danger, but there is no request for prayer that his financial needs be met. Every local assembly should have the opportunity to be full partners with us in the Lord's work, but, like Paul, we do not want to impose burdens upon churches. When Paul had occasion to refer to his needs, he was very careful to make it clear that he was not making an appeal. After reminding the Corinthians that he had received nothing from them for preaching the gospel, he says that he would continue to minister to them at no charge (II Cor 11:9-12). After gratefully acknowledging the gift of the Philippians, he makes it clear that his trust is in God, not man, to meet his needs.

The *second* way our financial needs are being met is by interested individual believers who are burdened by God to participate in our ministry. We have a substantial number of individuals who contribute to the support of individual church planters. This support was not solicited; if these people are moved to support us, whether financially or in prayer, God is to receive the glory. In Titus 3:14; I Cor. 16:6; II Cor. 1:16; Acts 14:27, 15:3,4 we see individual believers willingly meeting the needs of those traveling around doing the work of the Lord. This was done out of devotion to the Lord, and was a witness to the lost around them. If individuals approach us asking if there is a need, we feel free to respond according to that need.

The *third* way the needs of the team are met is by the team itself. In Acts 20:34 Paul states "you yourself know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me". Paul worked to meet the needs of the team. Paul also makes reference to Titus earning his wages when he asks the Corinthians "Did I take advantage of you through any of those I sent to you? I urged Titus to go, and sent the brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not act in the same spirit? Did we not take the same steps?" (II Cor. 12:17,18) We believe that a portion of the church planter's giving should go to the support of the team. This will lessen the burden of financial support from the participating churches and from the new works.   A substantial part of the team=s need is met by team members.

We recommend that church planters not normally give substantially to the church they are planting since this will offer those churches a false sense of security in regards to their financial stewardship. The church needs to become responsible for giving to the poor, missions, etc. The church planter should be exemplary in his giving, even though it is not to the new work in which he is engaged. He should let them know that his giving is to other churches and missions. Normally we do not receive giving from any church we are planting, but will receive offerings from them after we leave.

Therefore often unsupported members of the team are heavily involved in supporting the team

financially. Supported members give to the team only if there are other members they are investing in. Otherwise they usually give to established churches or missionaries in other fields.

In poorer, developing countries this practice of not giving to new works should be scrupulously obeyed. Churches heavily subsidized by the church planters often not only become dependant on the money of the westerner, but also disgrace the testimony of the saints. It is easy for wrong motives to crop up and genuine Christians be reduced to becoming "rice Christians". Except in extremely rare situations the church planter should remain firmly outside the financial circle of the church. We encourage teams to develop policies to give guidance to their members, especially when working amongst the poor.

In summary, it is the team's belief that we are called to the ministry of church planting. It is also our belief that the Lord has provided for our needs in three ways: the church, the individual and the church planter. God will provide "the laborers to go into the harvest fields, that are white for harvest". As we trust the Lord to save His own and gather them into His church, we must also trust that the Lord will provide the financial means.

Questions For Further Discussion

1. Where are you giving?

2. Why?

3. Why is it not good to give to the church you are planting?

4. How else can you destabilize a new work financially?

5. Is the Lord satisfied with your stewardship?

6. Do you need to make any changes in your stewardship?

Section III

Developing and Reproducing Teams

Chapter 7
Hard Targets

If the goal of reproduction at every level (disciples, leaders, congregations, networks of congregations, church planters and church planting teams) is to be achieved, then we must keep moving forward in this multi-faceted effort. One of the biggest enemies of pioneer church planting is falling into a rut and then becoming complacent about lack of progress. This is especially true in resistant fields like the Muslim world. It is easy to allow our expectations to dwindle which leads to falling into a routine of maintenance. I have seen teams go years without making any appreciable progress in church planting.

I was trained as a research scientist which has been very helpful in church planting. We were trained to expect 99 experiments to fail before we finally got our Abreakthrough≅. Each time we evaluated what went wrong and devised a better experiment the next time. But if we don=t keep the goal in sight and constantly evaluate every failed experiment, then we could easily loose hope and motivation. When something is not Aworking≅ it is easy for expectation to disappear. But this is largely a matter of how we view the experiment. If we see that a failed experiment did Awork≅ in that it showed us what *not* to do then we can learn from that what might be more likely to work next time and try another experiment. Many Americans today are brought up in an instant society that expects immediate results. Pioneer Church Planting in resistant fields is *NOT* such an endeavor.

Because pioneer church planting in resistant fields can take such a long time we have broken the task down into 7 phases (See Appendix 9 for the Church Planters Phase list). Under each phase we have listed a number of activities and skills which are helpful in getting the team to the next phase. Each of these phases may take upwards of years to get through depending on the field. But the phase list is helpful for the team to keep evaluating their progress toward the goal and setting new plans and expectations within phases.

Hard Targets

To develop individuals as well as teams through these phases, we have found it helpful to establish an evaluation process that uses Hard targets. Hard targets may be for individual team members or the team as a whole.

Hard targets are goals that need to be achieved within a certain time frame. We would liken this to archery where a bow and arrow is used to hit a target. The goal or in archery is to hit the target. There are a number of activities that will enable you to achieve this goal. The ultimate goal is to hit the middle of the target. Hard targets should not be soft targets (not measurable such as "we will witness better") or targets that are easily achieved or nonessential to the primary task, but targets that are God sized so that our dependence is upon the One who supplies the power, strength, and direction necessary to fulfill the goal. Jesus in Matthew 10 gives the twelve a hard target and then sends them out "...go rather to the lost sheep of Israel." Jesus not only gives them a goal to achieve

but also gives them some activities that will help them achieve their target. "...preach as you go, saying 'The kingdom of God is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons."

If one reads the letters from Paul to Timothy and Titus, members of his team, one will find them filled with Hard Targets. A valuable exercise is to go through these letters and outline Paul=s hard targets for these church planters.

I liken hard targets to education's behavioral objectives (BO) which state the expected behavior of students at the end of a given teaching unit. For a Physical education teacher, an example of a BO for the students could be playing a basketball game by the end of the quarter. The activities that would help achieve this BO would be shooting, dribbling, and passing skills. So also with the hard targets of a church planting effort. Say a team has a group of 6 new believers gathered. A hard target might be to have a covenanted community established at the end of six months. We have found 6 months to be a reasonable length of time to set for achieving a hard target. The team would then list activities that they would do in order to achieve the hard target. They would often have weekly checks to make sure they are carrying out the activities and monthly checkups to see if the activities are taking them to the goal. At the end of six months they would review progress, evaluate success and failure and make new hard targets for the next six months.

Hard Targets are strategic in nature, that is, *where we are going*. **Activities** are tactical in nature, that is, *how are we going to get there*. Hard Targets strive to extend the kingdom by establishing the church. Most hard targets are not maintenance or administrative in nature. Administrative tasks consume time, energy, and effort and usually do not *move* the church planting team toward establishing healthy, reproducing churches. Hard Targets should be about six months in length for short term and one to five years in length for long term. Of course the team should be flexible enough to change them at any time God gives new direction or revelation.

We write Hard Targets with three areas in mind:

The hard targets below are all real ones we have used for ourselves or teammates.

1. Individual, personal movement.
     Hard targets can be written for individual growth in character with respect to ministry. Example: Suppose a member of you team is very disorganized in terms of use of time. A good hard target would be: AI will make good use of my time as determined by my team leader≅.
     The activities: "I will have my week organized in terms of work, study time, evangelism and discipleship by Sunday evening and track progress on my use of time during the week. I will submit this to my accountability partner each Monday when we meet." (This kind of multi-step activity we would also call an action plan.

Hard Targets can be developed for growth in character relating to family.

Hard Target: We will function more effectively as a family as measure by my wife=s evaluation, especially with respect to child rearing.

Activities: "My wife and I will create a family mission statement, develop behavioral expectations for my children around these, and implement a system of rewards and discipline reinforcing these."

Hard Targets can be developed with respect to personal ministry

Hard Target: I have been doing no evangelism. Therefore I will set a hard target of witnessing to 5 people a week.

Activities: I will pray every morning for an opportunity to share the gospel each day. I will block out time at the local cafe at least 3 times a week looking and praying for opportunities to share the gospel. I will go out with Joe (the team evangelist) at least once a week.

2. Team Movement:

Hard Target: "We will develop an effective team life which will sustain our walk with the Lord and enable our families to grown as measured by a team evaluation in six months".

Activities: We will meet weekly as a team for worship and training focusing on the Aone anothers≅ of the New Testament for Christian community. We will also have accountability couplets which will meet face to face weekly for prayer and accountability for our walk with God and ministry.

3. Church Planting Movement:

Hard Target: "We will have an evangelistic Bible study in a home within the next six months".

Activities: We will make a list of all our friends and begin to follow up by visiting in their homes. We will visit at least one a week.   During this visiting time we will endeavor to get into the word answering whatever practical questions they might have about God, life, or whatever. We will then ask them if we can study the Bible on a regular (weekly) basis in order to look at such things. We will ask them if they have any friends that they might invite to such a study. We will pray for each other weekly and update each other on our progress at our team meetings.

For more help in setting hard targets we would encourage you to look at Appendix 9 which was written by a Frontiers Team Leader for his team. For more ideas on hard targets for personal growth we would encourage the reader to refer to the Manual for House Church Planting in Networks, Chapter 15 as well as appendices 19 and 20.

Setting hard targets for #3 begins by assessing where you are in your church planting efforts and where do you need to be. We would again encourage the team leader to use the Church Planters Checklist (Appendix 9. Each of the phases culminates in a hard target. The activities list under each phase can be used to develop other, smaller increment hard targets. Time frames for completing each phase will vary widely and we encourage teams to pray for specific guidance from the Lord as to appropriate time frames.

Evaluation is an important tool if the work is to go forward. Evaluation must be on a regular basis in

order for hard targets to be effectively reached. Our experience has been that weekly personal checks and monthly checkups is sufficient with a final evaluation at completion of allotted time for the hard targets.

Because of the need to cut down on administration, we use a simple monthly check up form. This form asks the following questions:

1. What are your present hard targets?

2. What activities have you engaged in to attain these hard targets?

3. What progress or success have you experienced?

4. What barriers have you encountered?

5. What are the next steps (activities) you need to take in order to overcome these barriers?

6. What help do you need from other teammates to accomplish this?

We have found that reviewing these evaluation questions monthly helps facilitate team accountability, interaction, brainstorming, support, and prayer.

Worksheet:

1. Set up Hard Targets for yourself and your team. Devise a system to measure progress.

2. Ask each team member to set up Hard Targets for himself/herself.

3. If you have sub-teams ask the sub team leader to do the same.

3. Should you put this in a covenant form with the sub-team leader? What should be some of the elements that are included in this covenant? This could later become a basis for a mentoring covenant.

Chapter 8
Reproducing teams

If sub-teams are set up as outlined above, mentoring networks should emerge naturally as the church planting teams reproduce themselves. The original leader trains an emerging leader via sub-teams to lead his own team. But this new team remains networked as he learns further, those practical skills of being a responsible team leader. As any team leader knows, a team looks substantially different through the eyes of a team leader than it did when they were a team member--or even that of a sub-team leader. There will be much to impart to these new leaders even when they have successfully led a sub-team.

The purpose of this chapter is to give a brief overview of our (FCP=s) experience in reproducing teams. I have also been involved in helping several Frontiers teams reproduce into mentoring networks. The role of the team leader in aiding the reproduction process will be reviewed, along with principles we have found which aid this reproductive process. Finally considerations if a team is looking to reproduce itself in a cross-cultural setting will be outlined.

Our Experience in Reproducing Teams

Picking up from our early experience as outlined in Chapter 2, by 1991 the team had expanded to 10 people and we were spread from Rhode Island to southern Massachusetts. Even as a single team we were planting several churches at one time. We were training interns from overseas who visited the team for several months in addition to new church planters being added to the team from the local churches.

As the team leader, I was unable to keep up with the training needs. Usually this meant evaluating each intern in character and competence, tailoring a training program for them and then meeting with them weekly to evaluate progress. Often there was personal discipleship, marriage counseling, etc that took time as well. Likewise, since all the other men on the team had secular jobs and now lived over a wide geographical area it was impossible for the entire team to meet together for training and prayer. This led us to break the team into two sub-teams with Jim Frost heading up one of the sub-teams and Mike Buffi (a member of the team since 1987) the other.

I met with Jim and Mike weekly helping them to learn how to train and utilize the men and women on their teams in the most effective ways. Effectively I became their mentor. They met with their sub-teams without me present to pray and discuss strategy and tactics of church planting required for the particular church the sub team was planting. In this way, Mike and Jim were learning the task of team leader that I had exercised over the previous five years.

As Jim and Mike proved capable, the sub-teams became two teams, one focusing on southern Massachusetts, the other on Rhode Island. I became a team member on Mikes team but available to Mike and Jim as a mentor. I was beginning to travel more to other countries to help other pioneer

church planting teams and thus was unable to provide the continuity necessary to remain as an effective team leader.

Mike and Jim were responsible as team leaders for training the church planters on their respective teams and coaching them from behind the scenes so that they might become effective in the tasks of church planting; evangelism, discipleship, and leadership development. Just as I had trained them, they were now training others. Jim took the bulk of the responsibility due to his age and giftedness to evaluate and invite new interns, but both teams received interns. The Fellowship of Church Planting Teams was born. It continues to grow by reproducing teams as well as networking with other teams from other parts of the country and the world which approach us for help.

Patterns for Team Leaders which enable teams to reproduce

In reviewing our experience, several patterns emerge which are important if reproduction of teams is to occur.

1. The team leader needs to have as his primary responsibility the training of his team members and allowing them to learn by doing the hands on work of church planting. As such, he will serve primarily as a facilitator. His teammates will have a variety of gifts. The team leader needs to be certain that the individuals are being utilized in a way that is conducive to accomplishing the task. He must realize that they are God=s provisions for him to complete to work. Thus, while observing them critically in order to give them further training, he must always look for the provision within them! Encouragement must constantly flow from him. All growth should be highly acclaimed for there will always be places which need improvement. Jesus gave 6 messages of encouragement to his disciples for every word of rebuke. What a good model for us! Good leaders must believe in those they are leading and see them as God sees them. There will always be room for improvement, but a leader needs to encourage all good progress!

He must also allow his team members to be stretched in new ways as God may direct that they be used in areas that may not be their primary area of gifting. The team needs to be a place where people are free to try new things and fail with gusto. You learn more from failure than success.

We have found stretching in non-gifted areas to be important for at least three reasons:

A. It enables the church planter to grow by leaning on the Lord as well as grow in his or her perspective of the work.   Also it enable the team leader to note any flaws in the team members walk with the Lord and character. We have often found that church planters can be more interested in fruit bearing and fruit watching than vine abiding (John 15)! This will need attention.

B. Often we find that new areas of giftedness are exposed in as he/she matures over the years and the team's needs change. These are usually exposed by trying them!

C. Once there is exposure to other aspects of the work he/she often grows in appreciation for

---

those whom God has gifted in different ways. This appreciation leads to greater intentional cooperation with other complementary gifted people. The team member will become more of a team player. A church planter who can only see the work through his/her gifts (eg. an evangelist) is often blind to other areas which are vital to see a reproducing church established. If they don't develop a wider perspective and appreciation for other gifts, they can become a disruptive liability to the team.

2. The team leader needs to constantly stand back to evaluate the overall status and progress of the work. He is responsible to see that the resources (people and time) are being used in the most effective ways both for the present work and also being developed for growing responsibility for the future.

3. The team leader needs to avoid doing the co-workers task *for* him. There are times when he will model ministry, but it should only be until the team member gets the idea of what to do. After that he should keep his helping restricted to only helping when the team member is "stuck". An impasse is an opportunity to train teammates in the skills needed to overcome obstacles. People learn best "By Doing". Thus, even though the team leader would likely do a much better job at the various tasks he delegates to team mates, he needs to serve more as a coach than a player. One team leader I worked with has the 60% principle. If a team mate can do it 60% as well as the leader than the team mate gets the responsibility as well as the authority and the Team Leader moves on to train others. I use a substantially lower percentage. The point is one must delegate sooner rather than later even though mistakes will be made.

4. The team leader must form close bonds with his teammates. As he trains them, he should keep an eye out for areas in which they lack experience or understanding in the task of church planting. As important as this is, it is even more important to get to know his teammates well enough to see character flaws which will be exposed in the course of carrying out the various tasks in church planting.

These character flaws are best addressed in the context of loving, secure relationships where the teammate knows that the team leader genuinely cares for him and wants what is best for him. As the team member makes progress in his walk with the Lord he will become an encouragement and model to newer believers in the church in which he is laboring. As the team member learns how to apply the scriptural principles in renewing areas of his life, he will have opportunity to pass these on, normally in the context of the church, but also with newer members of the team as they are added over the years. This is one reason we often have accountability couplets on teams--so that older ones can shepherd the newer ones and learn how to effectively carry out the ministry of transformation. Indeed, the team leader should be sure this is happening since it is unlikely the team member really understands these things until he is able to pass them on.

5. The team leader should always be on the lookout for new potential team leaders. He needs to realize that God has called him to reproduce himself in others whom God has called to this ministry. To these prospective team leaders he should be certain to give special attention. Every opportunity

should be made for them to be exposed to every facet of the complex task of church planting and leading a church planting team. As soon as possible, he should be given other younger church planters to train. Eventually he and his younger church planter(s) should function as a sub-team in order to see how he functions in a limited leadership capacity. As he grows in skills, character and confidence, he should be encouraged to launch out as a separate team. In some cases it may be the old team leader who launches out into new areas leaving the newer TL to head up the team which remains in the original area.

If a team is functioning in a restricted access country where there is danger a person might be expelled, high priority should be given to the team leader finding an apprentice who can be trained as a TL. That way, if the present TL is expelled, the team can continue in its task with less disruption. This emerging team leader needs to be kept fully informed of all the different relationships and expectations in which the team is involved. This has been very helpful with Frontiers teams.

6. An important task of the team leader is to be certain that conflicts and disputes which arise from having diversity of gifts and perspectives on the team are resolved in a Godly way which leads to the maturing of all those involved and the appropriate functioning of each part. Doing so will teach the team members skills which will be important to pass on to the church. This will also offer the team leader great opportunity for personal growth as he will often have to confront his own flesh in order to deal with strife on the team, much of which is likely to center on him.

7. A word about facilitating team leaders other than those developed from within the team (eg. teams operating at a distance away and therefore unable to serve in a resident apprentice program with the team). It is easy to be driven by the expediency of reproducing teams. It is likely if you are a successful team leader that other men who desire to be team leaders will be drawn to you. Some may want to be immediately recognized as team leaders of separate teams while they pick your brain.

I think it is important that as much as possible these folks should be integrated onto an already existing team before they become team leaders. This integration will likely expose character flaws which will arise later, and with far worse consequences when they are a team leader. A good principle is that those whom God has called to lead He has first called to follow. There may be team leaders who are successful by starting in that position, but most would benefit greatly by starting within a team and learning the ropes from a position of following someone with greater experience. (The exception to this would be when starting a cross-cultural team--that is, one whose team members are from a different culture. This is covered below.)

8. There may be times when there is no other choice but to facilitate a team leader who has not been developed from within a team. This is especially true of team leaders who are geographically removed from your team and are already actively engaged in church planting. If they do not have any churches coming together you might still encourage them to intern with your team and thus follow the procedure in #6 above. However, if churches are already being formed, this is probably not the best course.

In the latter case it is wise to draw up a covenant which clearly spells out the expectation of the relationship between the two team leaders. Expectations of the mentor and TL should be spelled out such as: reporting procedures and frequency, visits, accountability, training, crisis intervention, etc. A procedure for conflict resolution between the mentor and team leader is especially important to agree upon before conflict arises. A specified duration for the relationship is wise with periodic evaluations and escape clauses as a possibility as the relationship changes over time. (See Appendix 8 sample Mentoring Covenant)

9. A team leader may find himself highly successful at facilitating new team leaders. If this is so, he might consider whether or not the Lord is calling him to the ministry of mentoring team leaders as his primary task. (see Chapter 8). In this case he may have to step down from active Team Leader responsibility and serve with a team instead. This will often free up more time for him to be absent from his team in order to visit teams he is mentoring.

Starting Cross-cultural Teams

If a team is planting churches in a different culture, the team leader should recognize that God is likely to call some of those who are being won to Christ to the ministry of church planting. A major purpose of a church planting team laboring among an unreached people should be to produce indigenous church planting teams. These teams will plant reproducing churches as well as spawn new teams. Eventually some of these teams will be called to cross-cultural church planting as well. It is possible that a team of national church planters could even come into existence before a church does.
   Paul seems to have sometimes recruited members to his team from the target group before he had a church planted!

The team leader will have to use much wisdom in discerning the emerging believers who might have an apostolic calling to plant churches. He needs to be certain that their motives are pure and their eye clear in seeking the Lord's will. (Of course motives are seldom completely pure. But all carnality should be repented of and factored out of the decision making process. A Team Leader needs to be humble submitting himself to other leader in the area of motives.) Impure motives for power and prestige will lead to destruction in the churches and tarnish the Lord's reputation. It certainly will be necessary that the team leader himself have all the logs out of his eyes in these areas!

He will need further wisdom to know how much an emerging team leader from another culture should be exposed to the life of the western team. Certainly there will be greatly different structures and procedures on the new team than there would be on the western team. For instance, western teams generally have high financial needs with most on the team deriving some support from the west. A local, indigenous team may all be made up of tentmakers, which simplifies structures greatly.

For example, FCP is such a local team of church planters here in R.I. It is made up almost completely of men who derive their support by secular jobs. This sets a good example for the believers in the emerging churches who don't look for a two-tiered (clergy-laity) Christianity. It also allows the team

to operate without having to spend effort at fund raising, accounting procedures, etc. Obviously this is very different from a team of missionaries who has been sent by churches here in the U.S. to another country and have to go through the process of support raising, entrance strategy, furloughs to sustain relationships and support and now finds itself in a cross-cultural situation with all the complexities that it involves. (Although this is perhaps the norm now amongst western missions, we are exploring teams which will be made up of tentmakers. This model will definitely help set the pace for national teams.)

The new, indigenous, national team must be encouraged to find new paths which are relevant to their needs as opposed to simply following procedures which may be necessary and relevant to a western team. Indeed these western methods will likely convey patterns which will inhibit the freedom of the new team. Therefore it is probably wise to keep the nationals separate from a good deal of the team activity until it is clear what may be transferrable.

But the basics of leading a team, including developing skills of evangelism, discipling, transformational ministry, and leadership training, should still be transmitted from the team leader to the new national team leader. Encouragement should be given to the new leader to develop and utilize new, and perhaps more culturally appropriate methods to accomplish the above tasks. The western team should not try to exert control over the methods employed by the new team. Instead they should encourage new paths, praying hard that the national team will find the Lord's will.

Once an indigenous team of church planters is planting new churches, training new church planters and sending out new teams to other parts of the country, the original team(s) task is complete. They can move on to another people group. It may be wise to bring an indigenous team from that former nation to speed the task if the next people group is close culturally. At the very least it would likely be wise to include members from the national team on the new team going to the new nation (since all the members will be in the new case cross-cultural). This seems to have been the strategy of the Apostle Paul picking up Luke, Timothy, Epaphras, etc. Maybe it would even be wise to step aside as team leader and allow one of the members from the closer culture to lead the team. Then the old team leader could serve as a mentor.

Worksheets:

1. Have you set up discipleship chains on your team (see Manual for Planting House Churches in Networks for more on discipleship chains)? Actually draw them in a box diagram to evaluate the relationship of team members to each other. Be sure you include the women.

2. Who are the emerging team leaders? Can you set up any to become semi-autonomous sub-teams focusing on a particular church planting work?

3. What kind of accountability will you have with the sub-team leaders?

Chapter 9
Mentoring Team Leaders

Mentoring networks for us evolved naturally through reproducing teams as discussed above. But mentoring team leaders is a bit different than training church planters. We believe that each team is autonomous and thus each team leader needs to be learning how to hear the voice of God through prayer, his circumstances, his team, and networking with other leaders including a mentor. Often new leaders experience a sort of reaction to the leader they served under much like an adolescent who is leaving home. Facilitating such a one can be tricky. Also when someone with no deep relationship approaches a mentor for help, it should be done so in a way that does not compromise that team leader=s place with his team. This chapter gives some ideas on approaches to mentoring we have found helpful.

Church Planting: A Craft not a Science

At the outset one who is going to mentor church planters must realize that church planting is a craft rather than a science. If church planting were a science, then the task could be reduced to a formula or methodology which could be repeated over and over again with predictable results. Too often, I think, church planters are looking for a scientific, predictable formula by which churches can be planted. But looking for such a method can actually short-circuit God's plan for using the task of church planting to stimulate growth and development on the part of the church planter.

Church planting is more like a craft. There may be certain principles which all craftsman (say a carpenter) must use, but the way he uses them, when, and how will differ according to the particular strengths and weaknesses of the craftsman. There are many different ways to build a house. Each craftsman will have to learn how to accentuate his strengths and compensate for his weakness. No two craftsmen will be identical. When a team is involved in planting a church the combination of strengths and weaknesses of all the members become very unique indeed and it will require great discernment on the part of the mentor to help the team leader discern the best combinations.

Different Material

Each time a church planter builds there will be subtle differences in the materials with which he works. A carpenter may use oak or pine when building a cabinet. Even if he is using the same wood there will be subtle differences such as the grain, knots etc. All this must be taken into account as he lovingly builds his cabinet.

The material which God provides for the church planter is people. The leader will have to take into account both the people God has placed on his team as well as the people God has brought to begin His church. The team leader needs to allow the Holy Spirit to lead and guide him as he discerns his part in bringing to pass God's plan of building a church. Part of the church planting task is allowing the Spirit to flow through him in the process of working with God's people. This will include including utilizing his strengths and illuminating his weaknesses. In the process of starting the church

the church planter himself will be transformed. A mentor needs to see this as crucial to his task of training team leaders.

Character flaws in the team leader will become evident as he struggles with barriers which arise in the particular task of church planting. They may be flaws related to his relationship with his wife, his kids, others on the team or those in the church. Often they will have to do with the way he deals with conflict, frustration, or disappointment. Patterns of reacting to these things are learned early in life and often persist well into his life in the Kingdom. God will test the motives and intentions of his heart through the often difficult circumstances of church planting.

The team leader will often come up short of reacting in a Godly fashion. Correcting these character flaws is crucial in learning the tools of the trade. By learning how to correct these things in himself, thus building character, this will give him patience in working with his team mates as well as insight into how to build character in them as they go through trials. Many a skilled craftsman has been wrecked on the shoals of sin due to character flaws which should have been corrected when they became manifest early in his ministry. But left alone, they gradually erode the walk of a believer by giving the devil a place of attack (Cf. Ephesians 4:25-32). Contrariwise, when one has progressed through the necessary transformation he has more weight in dealing with spiritual matters in his own family, team and church.

Training Craftsman

The nuts and bolts of church planting I have covered in the next chapter, so I won't cover them in depth here. Suffice it to say that a thorough study of Acts 20:17-38 and other similar passages where Paul details how he planted the church will show that there are many tools which need to be in the team leaders tool box. Each team leader (and team member) will have a unique blend of strengths and weaknesses which will determine how he will engage in the task.

How does the church planter learn the craft? Like any craft it is learned over a long period of time. Trial and error play a large part. Getting to know ones limitations as well as ones strengths takes time. Learning how to discern the resources God provides (in the form of people and especially leaders) will take years. Many mistakes will be made and sometimes one might despair of ever learning the craft. But we need to be encouraged by remembering the years of preparation required by the apostle Paul (14 years) and some of his apprentices like Timothy.

The Process of Mentoring

An apprenticeship process can greatly speed the training of a team leader. New team leaders can be helped by having a master craftsman who can keep a watchful eye on them, giving suggestions, constructive criticism as well as encouragement! Such a relationship is perhaps best seen in Paul's relationship to Timothy.

A mentor of church planters should himself be a master craftsman. He should have had much

experience in the many different facets involved in birthing and nurturing of a church, as well as leading a team of church planters. Evangelism, shepherding, discipleship, counseling, leadership development, discipline, conflict resolution, motivating listless and stubborn sheep (and shepherds!)--all these are areas in which the mentor should have experience.

The mentor can emphasize certain foundational principles since these will be common to all churches (eg. I Cor. 3:10ff). But the mentor should keep in mind that each team leader he mentors is unique, each team is unique, and each church being planted is unique. The church is a living organism and will grow into its calling according to the resources God provides, the environment, strengths and weaknesses. Church planters are the midwives bringing it to birth (Gal.4:19), nursing it to a place of health and vitality, and then moving on, commending them to the Lord and the power of the Spirit. We have found many parallels between church planting and child rearing!

The mentor comes with a big bag of tools and has experience in how to use them. One aspect of the calling of a master craftsman is to pass his wisdom on to others (2 Timothy 2:2). So he makes himself available to other team leaders, taking tools from his bag and teaching them by experience how to use them.

As such, the mentor must always remember that he is a facilitator! His goal is to equip *the apprentice* to do the task. There are times when he will have to show him, and the apprentice will be an onlooker. But the training is not done until the apprentice can do it himself. Therefore, *why* something is done may be more important as *what* is done. This is essential if the apprentice will one day be able to utilize the tools in a variety of contexts. The mentor should keep in mind that when the a tool is truly learned and appropriated by the apprentice he will wield it in a different way than the mentor. The important thing is that the practice is suitable to the apprentice---not the mentor!

Function of a Mentor

The mentor is still himself a learner. Simply because a master has a bag full of tools with which he has much experience does not prevent him from learning more at each opportunity. Indeed the skilled craftsman learns by doing, and thus a mentor will learn each time he works with an apprentice.

He will learn more about his own strengths and weaknesses for they will look different when matched up with new and different team leaders. He will learn more about people as he strives to understand his apprentices, and, rather than demanding uniformity in methodology, he strives to see the apprentice develop within his own strengths and weaknesses. A big part of the growth of the master occurs as he strives to see the work through the eyes of the apprentice.

It is probably best that the mentor not be on the scene with an apprentice the whole time. If he is making trips to visit to apprentice, he will be certain to find times when he can see the work close up in order to see the apprentice in action. He needs to be asking many questions, collecting as much data as possible. He will need to learn the personality of the apprentice team leader as well as the

team in which he is working. He will need to get to know the converts, contributing aspects of the culture etc. etc. He needs to be careful in jumping to conclusions thus leading to superficial answers to complex problems.

<u>The mentor must be an encourager.</u> Jesus encouraged his disciples six times for every time he criticized them. We need to be reinforcing everything we see as good and helpful. The apprentice should be secure in his strengths! The mentor needs to seek as many ways as possible to honor the apprentice team leader in the eyes of the team as well as the church.

<u>The mentor needs to be a character builder.</u> Many times in this process the mentor will see flaws in the character of the apprentice as well as in his methods. He should lovingly point these out with the emphasis far more on character. He needs to show how they will inhibit the leaders effectiveness as well as how they may be dangerous to the long term health of the apprentice. Those that will prove fatal, he must demand change in and work until the character is reformed more closely into the image of Christ. If the apprentice rejects the help this will likely lead to a parting of the ways.
But the mentor must keep in mind that the times of greatest openness on the part of an apprentice is usually when he is suffering (Romans 5:3-5) and failing. Thus it is important for a mentor to be geographically close enough to arrive on the scene during crisis, for it is crisis which will often reveal fatal flaws. Revelation should proceed with much encouragement about God=s sovereignty and love. AThose whom the Lord loves he disciplines, and scourges every son he receives.≅ And again: ANo discipline for the moment seems to be joyful, but grievous. Yet to those who are trained thereby, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness. It is at these times when the apprentice is often most open to seeing flaws in his own life and what God might want him to learn through the crisis. These are often watershed times leading to greater ministry.

<u>The mentor needs to teach by demonstration.</u> As the mentor gathers data, and begins to get a handle on the size of the apprentices tool box, he begins to open his chest of tools and bring out those which might be helpful. It is best to bring them out one at a time so that the apprentice will not be overwhelmed and confused. It might feed the mentor's ego to impress apprentices, but it is often very discouraging for them (AI could never be like you!≅ is a sure sign the mentor has failed.). Each time the mentor brings out a tool he explains that the tool won't exactly do the job. The apprentice needs to adapt it to his use, his team and the needs of the community thus making it his own.

The mentor needs to have broad enough experience to figure out which tool is most important for the apprentice to use first and then progress to others tools when appropriate. The apprentice needs to practice using the tool as soon as possible. The master may need to demonstrate it (modeling) once or twice, but the apprentice needs to wield it soon--even if poorly. It will take years for him to become a master (and indeed many will never be called to this task), so it is no wonder that the mentor is able to use the tool better. If the master needs to demonstrate, he should do so in a simple and humble way. The goal is not to get the apprentice to ohhh and ahhh, but rather to give him confidence that the tool can be wielded. An ego only gets in the way of being an effective mentor. A mentor's joy should not be in his own ability but in those of his pupils.

If possible, the apprentice should practice in the presence of the mentor so that the master can give **TONS OF ENCOURAGEMENT** as well as *A BIT* of helpful advice. Remember: HE WILL LEARN with time and experience! Keep in mind the first time you used some of your tools. As the apprentice gains confidence, the master should encourage him to experiment and be flexible in trying new ways of using the tool. Uniformity should not be demanded. Church Planting is not a science, but a craft! There is more than one way to plant a church.

The mentor should give the apprentice as much responsibility as he is able to take. ***DON'T BE AFRAID OF A FEW FAILURES! WE LEARN MORE FROM OUR FAILURES THAN OUR SUCCESSES!*** Keep him in deep water. If the mentor is a team leader training new members of his own team, as soon as the apprentice has gained some experience in many of the facets of church planting confirm him as a full fledged church planter; no longer an apprentice (in craftsman terms--a journeyman). Do so in the presence of his team and then be certain you never undermine the confidence you have bestowed on him. It is important to bestow honor on those who have achieved a certain level of competence.

If the apprentice is a team leader, the mentor needs to find ways honor his apprentice before his team. The mentor needs to be very careful that he does not allow other members of the team to develop loyalties to the him rather than the team leader. Often followers are drawn toward the brightest flame! Don=t let this happen! Doing so will only sour the relationship between the mentor and the team leader. If the team leader needs to be corrected, this should be done privately by the mentor with the leader taking the appropriate steps of restitution with any members of his team he may have wronged.

As the mentoring relationship changes as the apprentice proceeds to being a journeyman, the mentor needs to recognize that the journeyman will still need lots of encouragement. The mentor needs to be a good cheerleader and a good pray-er. Commend him to the Lord, intercede for him, but don't inhibit his development by hanging around too much. Be a resource at a distance. Always look for opportunities to bring him to a new level of effectiveness. Always be on the lookout for those that have the stuff of a master and give them more time, encouraging them to begin mentoring other aspiring apprentices. Help them build networks by recommending to other team leaders who may be seeking you out to instead seek help from new emerging mentors. Look for some of your best apprentices to give to these new, emerging masters. Save the toughest, and those least likely to succeed for yourself. After all--you are a master!

Conclusion

In mentoring we are talking a long road. In our experience a prospective team leader apprentices under a mentor (sometimes on the same team) from 2 to 5 years depending on his life experience and Christian experience. Some, even many, during that time will find that they are not called to lead a team and will either join an already existing team or even return to ministry in the local church. For

this there is no shame since the purpose of church planting teams is to build and strengthen the church. Others will gain enough facility with the tools to progress to becoming journeyman, heading up works and even leading teams.

I think it unlikely for a journeyman to become a master before 10-15 years of total experience. We must keep in mind that some, even most team leaders are not called to be masters--that is, to be primarily engaged in training new team leaders and reproducing new masters from journeyman. There is no shame in being a journeyman church planter, for they will directly plant more churches than masters since a master must split time between training and planting. I would think it unlikely for men to be masters much before age 40.

We need to keep in mind that God saved us with a plan in mind, and like Paul we need to "strive to lay hold of that for which I have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus". (Philippians 3:12). He has a path for each one of us. Let us press on to that, whether it be a leader in the church, a journeyman church planter or a master builder. Let's be committed to help any others we can along the way in whatever way we can.

Worksheet:

1. Go through the Church Planters Checklist and evaluate your state of preparedness. You might make a sub list of those things which appear to be especially crucial to being effective church planters. Make a note of those things you believe God has specially gifted you.

2. Take time to take stock of the tools in your toolbox and which new ones needed to be added. Where are your weaknesses? How can you grow in these areas?

3. How effectively have you passed on to others what you have learned? How can you be more effective?

4. Make a list of those you are mentoring. What do you have that you need to be passing on to them? Is your ego getting in the way?

5. If you don't have any specific person, who on your team do you see as being the most likely one who could take over from you in the event God called you on? What can you be doing to equip that person for being an effective TL?

6. See the chapter on Hard Targets. Set some for your mentoree's. Plan the work and work the plan.

Chapter 10
Developing Master Builders
A personal testimony

If we liken church planting to a craft, then we could differentiate between 3 stages in a church planter's development: apprenticeship, journeyman, and master.

Apprentice: Usually a younger man who either thinks he has the call, or has been confirmed by a local church, but has not yet planted a church. His effectiveness would be greatly helped if he were to learn the trade under the oversight of a journeyman or master. An apprentice can be an older man often who comes to the Lord late in life (like the apostle Paul who apprenticed under Barnabas). An apprentice could also be a church planter who is apprenticing to be a team leader.

Journeyman: A man who has had experience planting one or more churches. He would likely (though not necessarily) be at least 30 years old. He has sufficient tools to head up a church planting work but would likely need periodic help from others when facing new, difficult problems. He could be a good team leader, although would network with other TL's and hopefully a master since he knows he still has much to learn. A good team will have a good combination of apprentices and journeymen.

Master Builder: A man likely in his forties or older who has served for years doing the work of church planting in a variety of situations. Although continuing to keep his hands in church planting, one of his primary tasks would be training journeyman and apprentices to become master builders.

In this paper I will attempt to lay out, from my experience, a plan for developing master builders.

The Problem

The church planters I have met seem very goal oriented. They see their task as organizing a church. Evangelism and discipleship are seen merely as means to this end, and usually do not go very deep in touching the inner life of the convert. After winning a few people and organizing the church, they then leave, hoping somehow the church will miraculously find pastors for the flock; men who will be able to reprove, exhort, comfort and disciple converts into the fullness of what it means to walk with Christ.

For a church planter to have such a limited view of church planting is like a parent giving birth to a child and then leaving the child, trusting God to meet his/her needs. We may think this is faith, but instead is presumption (and sometimes the line between the two is hard to draw!). Yet pastoring and church planting are seen by most missionaries as distinctly different callings. Often church planters seem to despise and look down on developing pastoral gifts and even see these as actually impeding the ministry of church planting. Jesus said, "When a disciple is fully trained, he will be like his master" (Luke 6:40). One of the central tasks of the church planter is to train up leaders who are able to shepherd the flock.

Looking for the Quick Fix

The scriptures will not allow a superficial view of church planting! I believe such a view has come out of a culture that focuses on specialization and efficiency. Because of this, we value the "quick fix". We do not like commands like "be patient" or "wait on the Lord", nor tasks like personal preparation necessary for some gifts which may take years to master. Most young men I have met are looking for a quick, easy way to plant churches. They want results and they want them now! Anything less than immediate results must reflect a lack of faith or poor methodology. When this idea is countered with the years (generations) of labor that it took to open up south-Sahara Africa or Korea, the confronting one is often dismissed with a look of scorn or with a patronizing glance at the Aold timer≅.

Having been involved in church planting for 25 years I have been discouraged by this tendency in the USA to look for the quick and easy way to achieve God's purposes. We are a "fad" society and this has washed over into our American Christianity. The sectarian statement "This is THE way!" has been heard from the Bible exposition schools, the signs and wonders groups, charismatics and the church growth schools. Whereas all of these have elements that are valid and helpful, often the result is that confused sheep wander from watering hole to watering hole looking for some new thing which will hold *the key* to a spiritually fulfilling life. It is especially sad when those whom God has called to plant His church are wandering in the same way.

Many think little about the methods employed and how they might help or hinder the planting a movement of powerful, reproducing, life transforming churches. Methods are simply plugged into a program and out pops a church. If we honestly evaluate such approaches, we find that quick methods usually yield superficial results! Such churches will often not persevere through the Satanic storms which will surely buffet them (Cf. Acts 14:22). The sheep will be scattered and set about looking for new watering holes.

The Example of Paul

Whereas the Apostle Paul may have used signs and wonders to gain a hearing (Cf. Acts 14:1-3), and certainly relied on teaching and charismatic gifting, a close look at his church planting methodology as seen in the Epistles and Acts shows that pastoral tools were a large part of his tool box. In the entire book of Acts, the address to the Ephesian elders (20:17-35) gives the clearest account of the nuts and bolts of Paul's methodology--and it looks pastoral to these eyes!

I find it interesting that the three personal letters Paul wrote to church planters are now described under the general heading "Pastoral Epistles". These are Epistles written to church planters and reinforce Paul's pastoral methodology for church planting. You can only reproduce what you are. Church planters must have strong pastoral gifts if they are going to train pastors. How it pains my heart when I hear a young man quote Paul's exhortation to Timothy "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. 4:5) and then ignore the rest of the book and appeal to the evangelistic example of Philip.

Usually this is done to reduce the task of an evangelist to bringing a person to "make a decision for Jesus Christ". The verse quoted is written at the end of Paul's life, and, in context, he is passing his church planting torch to Timothy. <u>He</u> is the example of the evangelist that he is passing on the Timothy--not Philip! The two letters which precede this passage summarize the work of an evangelist; Paul's work, Timothy's work. A cursory reading will show that much of the work of an evangelist was pastoral in nature! Very little (any?) of what is written in 1 and 2 Timothy have anything to do with leading a person to Christ. But most of what is written has to do with the extensive job of shepherding and training and appointing new shepherds.

The Task of Church Planting

The task of a church planter/evangelist is to propagate the evangel. That is, he is to plant a church which will continue to be a strong witness of the Lords presence in the world and of His coming again (Cf. John 17:20-26 for the nature of this witness). Such a church should have as its goal the reproduction of disciples, leaders, new congregations, and teams of church planters which will continue to loot Satan's house until the Lord returns. Establishing this kind of church involves evangelism which not only introduces a person to the King but also trains him in the tasks of Kingdom Living. It focuses not only on the doctrine and power necessary to initiate a person into the Kingdom but also on how to sustain a vital, transforming life in service to the King. Such disciples will reproduce disciples insuring a vibrant church which will reproduce and continue in community, sustaining a vital, transforming walk in this Kingdom.

Pastoral ministry is essential to assure vital health and reproduction of the evangel through churches (Cf. Ephesians 4:11-16). But those to whom God has given this gift (elders) need training by those planting the church (Cf. 1&2 Timothy, Titus). The church planter who likens his gift to that of Philip and trusts that the Lord will himself raise up pastors independent of the agency of the church planter may be trusting in signs and wonders but is taking shortcuts with principles and methods found in the Word of God! He is likely to plant superficial churches which do not propagate the gospel but wither with the first blast of persecution! The same could be said for those who think just teaching good doctrine will do the trick!.

I urge you to thoroughly read the passages quoted above along with the book of Acts and Paul's Epistles (most of which are pastoral in nature and approach) with an open mind before you reject this argument out of hand. Meanwhile, I would like to share my own testimony of my journey to becoming a reproducing church planter (mentor). I will explain how pastoral skills are central for effective church planting. Since church planting is heavily pastoral there is a danger that the church planter may cease his itinerant ministry due to confusing the call of a church planter with that of an elder (pastor). For that reason I will close this chapter with some thoughts on how the church planter can avoid becoming bogged down in pastoral ministry, doing the call of an elder and thus miss fulfilling the call of an evangelist/church planter.

One Church Planters Testimony

I felt the call of God upon my life to become a church planter very early in my Christian life. I had come to Christ at 24 years old, and threw myself wholeheartedly into the task of living the Christian life. I read Alexander Ratray Hay's book New Testament Order for Church and Missionary and was persuaded that I was an evangelist/church planter. That, coupled with reading several of Watchman Nee's books persuaded me that I was called as a church planter to China.

I was 27 years old, newly married, and three years in the Lord when I approached the elders of my church. The church had been started two years earlier and I had been one of the original group. It was committed to developing missionaries as well as pastoral leadership from within the congregation. After thoroughly examining my motives (which were a mixture of genuine desire to serve God and desire for personal recognition), my desires (to plant reproducing churches), my experience (two years leading Bible studies on an outreach to campus), and the mission agencies in which I was interested, they counseled me that I was not ready to carry out the task to which I felt called. I agonized over that judgement for three months before I yielded in my heart to these Godly men, and set about preparing myself to carry out the call of God by serving in this local assembly before going to the world.

For the next three years I continued to minister on the Brown University campus while continuing my job as a public school teacher. I evangelized through Bible studies and personal contacts. I shepherded those who came to Christ into the church. I discipled the new believers into a stable walk with God and many into membership in our church. In the process I was often involved in counseling situations. I had to rely upon the power of God and learn more about the great power which resides in us through the Spirit and the process whereby people are liberated from dead works to serve the living God. I trained new leaders to head up the campus ministries, lead evangelistic Bible Studies, do personal evangelism and disciple new believers into the church and into a stable walk with God. I consciously set about reproducing myself in others, thereby propagating the evangel on that campus.

I wept over my own failures, the failures of others, and often became discouraged. I learned my limitations, tried to drop out of the race more than once, and sought the help of more mature men regularly (i.e. I learned humility.). This task of propagating the evangel in others was not an easy task (Paul likens it to the agony of childbirth! Galatians 4:19)! The Lord often dragged me to Himself when I was too dull to recognize my thirst.

After three more years I was asked to become an elder of the church. My appeals to the fact that I was called to church planting were met with the rather logical argument that if this was true then I would have the opportunity to prove it. By becoming an elder I would learn the skills I would need how to train elders of churches I planted. Thus the experience of being an elder could only be helpful. Thinking that training adults in the church for ministry would be simply an extension of what I was doing with students on campus, I again threw myself into the task.

Within a year the church asked me to start a new church in the next town. I was sent off with 50 adults to found this new church and set about trying to recognize and train elders to replace me for

---

the time I would head to the field (I was no longer certain it would be China).

The task was far more difficult than I expected. If training students on campus can be likened to drawing a two dimensional picture, training shepherds to take full responsibility of the church was like painting a four dimensional picture! And I'm a lousy artist!

The task was far more complex since the men had to be taught how to be good husbands and fathers. Then they had to learn how to balance the many competing priorities in their life in order to have time to shepherd and disciple others. Since I had also balanced the priorities of family, job, and ministry for the past six years, I understood how to at least try to do that. But beyond that was the contrast that whereas the students were highly motivated to grow and serve, the men in the church were worn out and content with surviving. One of my major tasks was learning how to motivate men to act! Since I had not suffered from this problem it was a hard lesson!

Four hard years of learning more about my limitations, more about humility, more about going to the Lord before I dropped from exhaustion, or ran my family into the ground, and finally elders were in place who were able to shepherd the sheep. In late 1985, I was finally commissioned by that church to the ministry of church planting---almost nine years after I had approached my original church! Total time of preparation from the time I came to Christ: 12 years! During those 12 years, I often took encouragement from the fact that by some accounts the Apostle Paul was perhaps 14 years in preparation from the time of his calling in Acts 9 to his first missionary journey in Acts 13. And he was saved later than me (probably early 30's). His total time of missionary service was likely under 30 years.

The lessons I learned were hard, but needed, and have been applied over and over again in the many churches I have started since I was commissioned. I was learning to lay foundations, which are never noticed, but often determine the breadth and height of a person=s ministry. The lessons learned have been essential to fulfilling the task. I learned how to share God's truth in a way that persuades men to consider the Kingdom (1 Timothy 4:16, Acts 14:1); how to use the word to set free those held captive to sin (2 Timothy 2:24-26); how to recognize and train leaders (1 Timothy 3); how to deal with conflict in the church (1 Timothy 5,6). In those 12 years of preparation I faced all manner of spiritual warfare, personal attack, attack on my wife and children (2 Timothy 4:5-8). I learned the work of an evangelist. Finally I was sent out to learn how little I knew and how much was still to be grasped. I continue to learn that lesson down to the present day!

Other Paths to Church Planting

I don't think all those who are called to the ministry of church planting need to follow the path which the Lord laid out for me. Some do come through the longer road of serving churches in pastoral capacities as I did. Others come to us younger and have to learn on the job. Some learn in their own culture and others in other cultures (by far a more difficult task). But whatever path is laid out for the preparation of the church planter, it will not be easy or quick. Foundations take time! This process

can be helped by placing yourself under a good journeyman or master building who will give as much or more attention to your personal growth as to your production.

In a world that desires instant results and values little the laborious work of careful foundation laying, we need to remind ourselves of Paul, who waited and learned for 14 years before going on his first missionary journey, or Moses, who waited 40 years in the wilderness, or even Jesus who waited 30 years before entering into his ministry. Over and over Paul's words to Timothy are ones calling for hard work, patience and perseverance.

"Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier." 2 Timothy 2:3,4

Avoiding Entanglements

If the task of church planting is so pastoral in nature, and requires such a long time to learn the skills necessary, a question arises as to how one can avoid becoming so enmeshed in a church's machinery that he never gets to the field.

Apprenticeships

I think Paul realized that if everyone took the long route that he did, the harvest field would go to seed before the laborers got out there. Paul seems to have instituted a training method similar to our Lord Jesus in working with his younger church planters; a training method Jesus learned in his occupation as a carpenter and Paul would have been familiar with in his trade as a tent maker.

The method, of course, is apprenticeship. A young, enthusiastic, aspiring craftsman sits under the tutelage of a master craftsman usually for a number of years (5-7 years for many crafts) patiently learning the tools of the trade. He goes from watching, to hands on work under the watchful eye of the master, until finally he is doing his own work and developing a style suited to is own personal gifts and talents. At this point, he becomes a journeyman, able to do the work himself with a minimum of help. Over the years he might gain enough experience perhaps to become a master, training other young, enthusiastic, aspiring craftsmen. Not all church planters become masters, but certainly it would be wise if all learned from masters or journeymen. Many of these master church planters should consider the call to give their life to finding and training other masters.

As Paul went on his second and third missionary journeys he went out with one man (Silas), and picked up others along the way. These became part of his band, and learned the ministry of church planting from the master. The book of Acts and Paul's letters are filled with the names of people who traveled with Paul in this band of apprentices and journeyman, some eventually becoming masters and, in turn, passing on what they leaned to new apprentices. Timothy was perhaps the youngest of these, a youth perhaps in his late teens, when he began his years of service with Paul, eventually

becoming a master as did Titus. The three letters to these men are but a summary (though tremendously rich!) of the lessons learned from Paul.

Therefore one way to avoid becoming enmeshed in church machinery and not getting to the field early enough to learn language, culture, etc, is to encourage apprenticeship programs whereby new church planters are teamed with journeymen and masters in order to pass on what they have leaned in church planting to younger men. I will speak specifically to how this might be done in the next chapter.

Internships:

One way we have found effective is to offer internships for those considering the call of church planting. These internships expose a young man to the ministry for six months to a year. An intern is normally sent by a church or mission group and serves with a team a team for a specified period. He is personally mentored by a senior man on the team. A senior man has been fully trained as a church planter and has enough experience to be considered a journeyman or master (more on this below). Regular reports are forwarded to the sending organization. If it is confirmed that the apprentice has the call, the senior member encourages the church to commission to the team (or to a team in another field).

If he is commissioned to one of our (FCP) teams, he enters a prolonged period of further training where he is involved in planting churches under the tutelage of a journeyman on the team. Journeymen are usually over 30 years old, have been involved in all phases of planting at least one church and usually more, have themselves served under a journeyman, and been recognized by that man as being "fully equipped for the work of the ministry". One of the major tasks of journeyman is training new apprentices.

The goal is for the apprentice to learn the hard work of the ministry and take their place as journeyman as they develop the skill and character which will enable them to survive and train others in the war in which we are engaged. Some of these will eventually go on to be masters, starting and leading other teams by recruiting apprentices in whom they can reproduce themselves.

Any of the above routes may look involved and difficult, but shortcuts will tend to bring superficiality and a church that will likely fail in the storms that will certainly come.

Worksheet:

1. Make a list of everyone on your team. Evaluate them in terms of being apprentices, journeyman or masters (be sure to include yourself).

2. Make a list of the special gifts each one possesses. How can each person be used effectively on the team? How can you effectively equip them for that ministry?

3. How can they be used to pass on what they are especially good at? They need tons of encouragement!

4. Do you have an internship program on your team(s)? How many interns could your team take (see chapter on reproducing teams for help here)? What churches could you interest in sending interns?

Application:
A Network of Church Planting Teams

Chapter 11
A Network of Church Planting Teams
Fellowship of Church Planters International

This chapter outlines how we have applied the above principles to establish what we would view as a new kind of missionary training organization which involves cooperation between sending churches, churches being planted, church planting teams as well as the more traditional mission agencies. As we continue to extend this kind of church planting cooperation it will be adapted substantially. So this is just to give those who might be interested the benefit of our experience, limited though it is. The Fellowship of Church Planters International has existed as a intentional organization only since 1995, but the principles go back to FCP in 1985 and before.

Statement of Purpose

The Fellowship of Church Planters International (FCPI) exists to help churches fulfill the great commission by training, reproducing, and networking church planting teams which plant reproducing clusters of churches. FCPI teams are encouraged to have multiple affiliations as FCPI desires to bless and help other churches and mission organizations.

Fellowship of Church Planters International core values

The Fellowship of Church Planters International is committed to:
1. plant reproducing, linked networks of semi-autonomous house fellowships (churches).
2. network teams and churches to share resources and training.
3. inculcate within the teams and churches a great commission vision. This will be seen by teams and churches training and sending interns and teams to the unreached world.
4. have church leaders and church planters which will be, in the majority, bivocational.
5. train church leaders and teams using a relational, mentoring approach.

Description of Fellowship of Church Planters International

We have tried to model FCPI after the practices we find in the New Testament where Paul planted churches using teams. He often worked out of a center such as Ephesus for a time. He would reproduce teams from that center, saturating Asia with church planting. Eventually his team left as well. There seems to be no central governing organ or organization for the first century missionary endeavors. FCPI attempts to do the same, perhaps in modern terms best thought of like the Internet which has no central controlling organ. FCPI consists of multiple **church planting centers** but no central governing organs. Each Church Planting Center will include a church planting team or teams planting networks of cooperating house fellowships with ordained leaders.

New teams will affiliate with FCPI by covenanting for mentoring with an existing FCP team leader from one of the Development Centers (more of this in the next chapter). The new team will be

designated by the mentor either as a working in a *Church Planting Development Center*, or a *Church Planting Pioneer Center.*

Once a team has ordained indigenous elders in a network of house churches the churches will be independent of the team. The churches and team(s) may cooperate as partners in further church planting efforts and sending out new teams of church planters to other areas.

A Church Planting Pioneer Center

A Pioneer Center would be one in which there is either no team or no network of house churches. Pioneer Centers are promoted as priority areas to send fully trained interns and commissioned church planters trained in Development Centers.   Pioneer Centers would normally arise when a church, team, or prospective team leader* approaches an existing FCPI team leader for mentoring. The mentor for a Pioneer Center will develop a time table for getting a team functioning and then enabling the team to plant a network of churches thus becoming a Development Center.

Once the Pioneer Center becomes a Development center, it would be expected to actively seek to start or help other pioneer centers. This may happen by the team leader becoming an new mentor to a pioneer center (A team leader would officially be designated a mentor with FCPI when he is mentoring 3 teams. To insure quality training we recommend a mentor be training no more than 5 team leaders.) Another way would be the team itself reproducing and sending a new team to start a new pioneer center. A further way would be the team cooperating with other groups to train interns and church planters to go to other existing pioneer centers.

*In cases where teams or churches have dual affiliation (such as FCP teams which are also in Frontiers) the mentor is responsible to work within the existing structures to help the team or churches.

A Church Planting Development Center

A minimum requirement for a Development Center for Church Planting would be:
>   1. at least one network of interacting house churches (at least 3 home fellowships)
>   2. a functioning church planting team (consisting of at least two church planters or church planting families).

A Development Center not only plants churches, but is committed to training new church planters, sending out new teams and linking local churches to emerging churches in other areas. A mentor working with a Development Center will help them develop targets for reproducing churches, training interns,** recruiting potential church planters in their network(s) of churches, and sending them to new teams or spawning new teams.   The goal of this is to keep the team and churches focused not only on their local church planting efforts, but also on the unreached world..

**Interns can come from other Development Centers, as well as other mission organizations. In the

RI center we have had interns from Frontiers, TEAM, O.M., World Team.

Ongoing training for mentors and TL=s.

Mentors will engage in training new TL=s one-on-one by visiting them at least yearly. They will have ongoing interaction (at least monthly) through email reports as the team leaders report progress and barriers to the church planting task. Manuals like House Church Planting in Networks, Building Effective Church Planting Teams, and Principles for Healing of Souls have been developed for ongoing training.

Mentoring coordinators will be responsible to set up annual, regional meetings of FCPI Team Leaders and mentors can get ongoing training including working with case studies in a collegial environment (see chapter 12).

International Network of home fellowships

The house churches are not only networked locally, but links should also be encouraged to house churches in other cities and countries through FCPI teams. This should be explicit in their church covenants and could be as specific as which churches or distant teams they are linked with. Relational bridges need to be developed as a particular FCPI team expands its influence to teams and churches in other areas. But also churches should be linked worldwide by the church planters they send to other teams, by interns trained in that network of house churches now serving with other teams, and by ongoing communication and greetings between these churches as team members visit, elders and members visiting linked fellowships. Invitations to leaders and members from linked fellowships can be extended to visit their church fellowships.

Teams should encourage the relationships to be international as well as national and include links to teams working in unreached areas. Once again there is be no central headquarters (hence no denomination) but rather relationships would develop with the natural moving of the Spirit as He brings teams, church planters, leaders, and interns together through the years.

Chapter 12
A Church Planting Development Center
Fellowship of Church Planters, Rhode Island, USA

Once again, the purpose of this chapter is just to outline how we have applied the previous principles in such a way that a Church Planting Development Center emerged. Our hope is to encourage others who have a burden to see the church and teams cooperate together to extend the kingdom of God in answer to the Great Commission.

The Fellowship of Church Planters has become a church planting development center in Rhode Island, a small state in the USA. From 1989 to 1999 nearly 50 church planters, now serving cross culturally, have been trained in the churches and teams of RI. Another dozen have been through the training but for various reasons were not deemed ready for such cross cultural ministry.

In Rhode Island we have a network of cooperating churches and church planting teams. This consists of 4 larger type churches and a dozen or so house churches. The number of church planting teams has varied from one to three during this time, often with sub teams for more effective training. Internships have usually run from six to eighteen months. Initially the intern is interviewed and evaluated as to the type of experience he has had in church planting skills so an individual program can be drawn up for him. Then the intern and his family bonds with a team as well as the church or emerging church in which he will work. He is overseen by a senior church planter who will be certain that he receives the training he needs in character as well as acquire the needed skills for church planting. Personal, one-on- one discipleship is a vital part of this training. By seeing the intern in a variety of settings, important character issues can be discerned and help given.

We try to mimic as much as possible the stresses of cross cultural church planting. New England is a resistant field and also very ethnic as compared to other parts of the USA. So this is helpful. We also ask the intern to get a job so that we can see how well he balances competing priorities from job, family and ministry. In 1996 we added a tentmaking component to the training as Dennis Hardiman, a successful entrepreneurial businessman trains interns in entrance strategies and business skills. Many of our interns work in his company.

History

For those interested in building a Church Planting Development Center, a brief history may be helpful. The early vision was for Quidnessett Baptist Church in southern RI to plant new churches. From 1975 to 1985 four new churches were started. Two out of Quidnessett: The Cranston Christian Fellowship (1975), and Exeter Chapel (1981) and two out of the Cranston Christian Fellowship: Warwick Christian Fellowship (1981) and Lincoln Christian Fellowship (1986). (For a more detailed history see House Church Planting in Networks.)

In 1985 a church planting team was added to the mix called the Fellowship of Church Planters. FCP

---

actually oversaw the planting of the Lincoln Christian Fellowship in 1986-88. This new team concept came from sending out a missionary couple in 1983 by Cranston CF and Warwick CF to the Arab world with Frontiers. Frontiers was committed to church planting using teams for long term viability in resistant countries. For us it seemed like a good, Biblical concept so we borrowed the idea. FCP sent an additional couple to this team in 1988.

In 1987 FCP began to experiment with planting house churches which seemed a good model both for inner city work as well as resistant rural areas. But 1991 we had expanded to 9 house churches in a couple of clusters and had three church planting teams. It was at that point that we began taking more interns on a pretty regular basis. In the mid 90's Dick and Cathy Scoggins moved to England to serve as the church planting trainers for Frontiers teams. A number of Frontiers teams now use Rhode Island as an intern training base for prospective team members.

Present extent of the relationships

One of the goals of a development center is to help new church planting efforts get going. FCP has invested quite a bit of their resources in getting new pioneer centers going. The hope is that they will become mature development centers and plant numbers of churches and send out new Cpers and teams. Eventually these pioneer centers will be sister development centers that will add greater synergy as we cooperate together to expand the kingdom to the ends of the earth.

As we mentioned above the RI development center consists of house churches, larger type churches, and the church planting team(s). Church planters have been sent to Italy and England which are presently engaged in pioneer church planting. The team in England is well on its way to becoming a Development Center. Two teams in the Arab world have been trained largely by the development center in RI and retain close relationships. An additional 6 teams with Frontiers have had interns in RI. Several of these have requested to be designated pioneer centers so that new interns can be trained in RI. Other agencies have also had members trained in RI although none of these has expressed interest in being designated as a pioneer center.

We did not plan the above extensive relationships. They evolved over time. And they have cost RI some of their best leaders/church planters. The Rhode Island churches heavily support these new pioneer centers financially, in prayer and with visits of church leaders and church planters. The goal has always been to reproduce and fill the land by expanding outward by sending teams off, not building a large, centralized organization.

Key Elements

God has certainly been the one building the house. But we have tried to cooperate with Him. There are certain principles that seem to have been important in building a reproducing development center.

1. Reproduction is central to everything we do. Rather than building things bigger, we build then so

that they can reproduce (and thus often stay small). Disciples reproduce disciples, leaders reproduce leaders, churches reproduce churches, and church planting teams reproduce teams. This is costly.

2. One on one discipling focuses on competence and character. From the moment of their new birth, disciples are trained to serve and grow in the process of serving. Building the kingdom is central to everyone=s calling, not just for the elders or church planters. As a result every part of the development center, churches, teams, disciples, elders are important for ongoing success. This is not a Afull time Christian work≅ driven movement. Indeed fully supported people are discouraged and the burden is no them to prove they can be more effective by being supported.

3. This is not a fast way of developing new teams and church planters. We have found that any efforts in expediency usually end up taking longer or be less effective. The personal attention found in #2 is essential to what we do, not incidental. We have not found any faster way to do it, such as a Bible School approach.

4. As a result the relationships that have emerged over the years are organic rather than organizational. Relationships between the RI development center and new pioneer centers emerge out of investments that have been made in people over time. The ongoing relationships occur because of mutual desire and respect, not because of organizational requirement. The relationships have taken a huge amount of effort, time and energy over the years and it has not been without testing. One cannot have different types of churches, church planting teams, and other missionary organizations overlapping without a good deal of friction at times. But the humility learned in sustaining these relationships has definitely caused our own character to grow.

5. We are ready to give whatever we have to whoever needs it. We are building God=s kingdom, not our own. The goal was never to build something great in Rhode Island (and anyone who comes to look will certainly agree we have not!). We have sent away many of our best people to serve other teams and organizations. Several times FCP debated whether God might be finished with the team in which case that was fine, let=s just shift our attention to whatever is next. We are here still because He is still not finished with us. When he is done with FCP our hope is that it will simply disappear.

6. The goal was not to build a development center, that was just the product of the journey. Even now, the goal of FCP is to develop new pioneer centers which will develop new churches, which will send out new teams to develop new pioneer centers! The goal is not us, but the expansion of the Kingdom of God. Our responsibility is to do what we can in facilitating that. The moment we begin to look to our own kingdom and try to hang onto glory for ourselves, at that point the framework begins to break down.

Perhaps our governing principle is best expressed in the words of Jesus:

AUnless a corn of wheat fall to the earth and dies, it abides by itself alone, but if it dies it bears much fruit..≅ John 12:24

Chapter 12
Mentors and the Fellowship of Church Planters International

It should be apparent from above that mentors are essential for the expansion of the Fellowship of Church Planters International. Being a part of FCPI is a matter of either having an FCPI mentor or being an FCPI mentor. A mentor trains 3 to 5 other team leaders in church planting. The mentor will be dealing with anything that might prevent the team leader from being effective. This will include his personal walk with the Lord, personal character struggles as well as skills necessary to church planting. The reason we limit a mentor to 5 teams is that mentoring is intensely personal and thus a mentor should not be spread too thin.

Mentoring relationships are voluntary but covenantal, and for a specified period of time. Covenants will include the various expectations between the team leader and the mentor. This will include things like reporting expectations, visits, relationship to the team and any other organizations that may be involved. The relationship can be dissolved by either the mentor or the team leader. (See appendix 8 for a sample mentoring covenant.)

The mentor is a counselor/advisor as opposed to a director/boss. The mentor will respect the autonomy of the team realizing that the team is responsible before God to plant the church, not the mentor. Therefore the mentor will seek to find out from the Team Leader how God has been leading the team and work within those parameters. Hard targets will be developed by the team leader and given to the mentor who will hold him accountable for persevering in these. In the event a hard target does not look like it will lead to the desired goal, the mentor will endeavor to persuade the TL to adjust it. But the TL retains the final authority for any decisions affecting the team. The mentor can always dissolve the relationship if there is severe enough disagreement. In this case the TL must find another FCPI mentor if he is remain networked with FCPI.

Mentors working with teams in Pioneer centers will focus on developing hard targets around getting a team functioning and/or planting and reproducing a cluster of churches. Mentors working with teams in Development centers will focus on developing hard targets around training church planters and reproducing teams to send to new pioneer centers, in addition to church planting targets.

Mentoring Networks

The mentor should try to network the teams he is coaching so as to maximize the use of the resources available. He should not see himself as the sole reposit of wisdom.   If possible he should try to bring the team leaders in his mentoring network together at least annually so that they can help each other. He should also view team leaders in his network as assets whose gifts can be used to aid him in mentoring other teams in the network. New mentors and mentoring networks can be developed this way.   This will also enable a mentor to be less of a Ahub≅ for the network which can stifle reproduction of new teams and new mentoring networks.

Networks of mentors we will refer to as collegia.

Fellowship of Church Planters Mentoring Collegia

Definition and purpose:

A mentoring collegia would consist of from 3 to 5 mentors who would commit themselves to have an ongoing fellowship with each other. The members of the collegium would be a support group for encouragement and fellowship at what can be a very lonely level of leadership.

The members would be available to help each other solve sticky problems with their team as well as encourage each other to continue making progress with the teams they are mentoring. The members would also be available as a resource to assist and/or back up other mentors doing field visits and/or in disciplinary situations. The members of the collegium should also make sure they are developing new mentors who could join their collegium, other collegia, or start new ones. A collegium should have as one of their goals to reproduce every few years.

Membership:

A collegium begins when a minimum of three mentors commit themselves to be a collegium by covenant.

:New members will be sponsored in by existing members by the following procedure:

1. A prospective member would be championed by an existing member of the collegium. This could be someone the existing member has developed and trained as a mentor, or it could be someone from outside of FCPI who has approached the existing mentor to join the collegium.

2. The prospective member would gain approval for membership by the other members of the collegium. He would become a full member when he is mentoring 3 teams. Other members of the collegium should do everything they can to help recruit teams for new collegium members.

3. When collegia reproduce they will do so by a voluntary realignment of members. This may be geographic, but it need not be. The issues that drive who should be a part of a collegium should be who will best enable the collegium to be effective at mentoring.

Function:

Each Collegium would:

1. appoint a **coordinator** who would be certain that the collegium members are accountable to each other and doing what they have agreed to.

2. meet at least annually for a peer training. Outside resources can be invited for more formal training as the members deem necessary.

3. would devise accountability structures and procedures which would aid in helping to make sure that the members are effectively mentoring. This could include quarterly reports to the coordinator and to each other. The coordinator is responsible to alert the collegium if members are not being effective at mentoring. The members should then help those needing it.

4. pool resources so that one mentors strengths could aid another's weakness. For instance one mentor could be excellent in peacemaking and could visit with another mentor and his team if he needed help during a team conflict.

Appendices

Appendix 1
Guidelines in Setting Up Teams

The following guidelines have helped us and others in setting up teams. We offer them as a helpful starting place for you.

Church Planting teams with Fellowship of Church Planters International are set up as follows:

1. Existing churches serve as sending bases to the teams. It is important to distinguish the teams from the churches in this way. The teams do NOT send but receive. The churches send out the church planters. Churches should be aggressive to recognize and send out church planters to teams. Church Planters sent out from them are the second way the churches fulfill the great commission (the first way being reproducing in the local area). From experience we would expect that the majority of these church planters would be tentmakers (self supporting through gainful employment).

A. To be part of FCPI, a person will normally be sent by a church and received by a team.

B. New church planters would, for the most part, be assimilated into existing teams where senior members would have a mentoring role with the newer members. As teams get up to four or more family units, new teams would be encouraged to bud off from these larger teams. The newer teams would likely target new areas. If the teams are in a cross cultural situation, they would encourage nationals to join their team with the future goal of starting a national team to penetrate their own people group.

C. Some churches may ask for help in sending teams to areas where we have no teams. In this event, the petitioning group (church or other organization) will be asked to appoint a man to serve as a team coordinator (TC) and build a team around this man. Once he has a team, consisting of two or more family units, he will be called a team leader (TL). Men from existing teams may decide to relocate to work with this new emerging team. FCPI works with teams and not single church planters. A team does not consist of a husband and wife but a minimum of two family units.

D. In some cases, members of churches may decide to relocate to other parts of the country and show interest in forming a team. In this case this person would be designated as TC. He may be encouraged to recruit from existing teams as well as other members of the church (with the OK of the elders of course).

E. FCPI affirms the importance of the role of churches in this effort. FCPI sees itself as a part of the effort of the local church to fulfill the Great Commission. What the churches are doing locally in evangelism and church planting, the teams are doing extra-locally. We will do everything we can to keep the churches up to date with the progress of the work. Regular reports will go to the churches

through the mentor.

2. FCPI believes in the autonomy of church planting teams along the lines of Paul's apostolic bands. FCPI exists to network teams in such a way that new teams will benefit from the experiences of older team leaders who will mentor them. Resources and personnel can also be exchanged between teams as new opportunities for church planting arise in other areas. FCPI exists on the premise that all our resources belong to God and His kingdom. Thus they are to be used by Him as He directs. There is no place for protecting a single teams "turf".

A. We would ask team leaders of teams who desire to be part of our mentoring networks to work through the following with a more experienced TL who would serve as his mentor.

a. A <u>Covenant of Team Understanding </u>(COTU) or <u>constitution</u> detailing how the team will function. This would include how the team makes decisions and who will function as a contact person with FCPI mentor. (See Appendix 2 for more on this.)

b. A <u>Strategy Paper</u> which will outline the approach the team will use with respect to planting reproducing churches. See Appendix 3 for more on Strategy Paper.)

c. <u>Church Planters checklist</u> to find out where the TL has experience and where experience is lacking. This skills checklist is found in appendix 10.

B. Mentors should evolve naturally as TL's with less experience seek the more experienced TL to help them. Our hope is that mentoring networks will be developed in different geographical regions. The expectations of the parties will be written down in a covenant between the TL and the mentor. A sample covenant is in Appendix 6.

a. Some TL's will want minimal involvement with their mentor consisting of phone calls, letters and monthly reports exchanged between the TL and the mentor.

b. Heavy involvement with the FCPI mentor could include regular coaching visits from the mentor, e-mail, resources through the FCP web site, use of the manual, handbook and related training materials, request for recruits from other existing teams, requests for interns from some sending churches or missionary agencies, etc.

c. Most teams will opt for something in between. All involvement will be agreed to by the TL, mentor and the sending church (or agency).

d. Many teams going overseas may opt to go with an existing missions agency. Partnership agreements can be explored

(as with Frontiers). Although some teams may desire to remain just with the FCPI. It is understood in these cases that the sending church will likely pick up responsibilities for the home end of the team. Groups such as Antioch Network (Phoenix, AZ) can be helpful in facilitating churches to do this. FCPI is available to help the churches work through structures to facilitate their team.

FCPT exists to help churches spawn teams that would be effective in church planting. Our experience shows this to be a process that is punctuated by stops and starts which can be quite discouraging in the long run. Mentoring and reporting are designed to help teams and churches be in it for the long haul.

Appendix 2
GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING
A COVENANT OF TEAM UNDERSTANDINGS (COTU)

You, in your role as team leader, need to develop an Covenant of Team Understandings (COTU) which will enable potential team members to understand how your team will function. A copy of your COTU should be on file with your sending base (church) since it spells out your relationship with them. Also your mentor should have a copy as well. Try to keep this to 4 or 5 pages in length. It will generally spell out the relationship of your team members to you, to their sending churches and to any other agencies that may be involved. You may have a more extensive version for use by the team on the field in which you spell out more details. Likewise those members of your "home team" in your sending church may want more specifics as well. Get help from your church leaders, other team leaders, prospective team members or your mentor in thinking through those questions you get stuck on.

Consider the following points as you develop your COTU:

1. People follow someone who leads. Share your understanding of team dynamics in such a way that it enhances their confidence in team life. The COTU, coupled with the Strategy Paper will display your vision and the process through which the team will pursue that vision. Both papers together should inspire confidence and vision!

2. Do as much as you can to enable them to picture what team life would be like. Things like your leadership style, their participation, team reproduction and how interpersonal relationships will enable growth of all members should become evident to the reader.

3. Keep in mind your audience--the prospective team member. They will likely be looking for two things: (1) security from the leader and (2) freedom to take initiative. It is not easy to put these two contrasting things together. Keep this in mind as you develop your COTU, trying to balance security with creativity. If you have had leadership experiences in your other settings draw upon them.   Be tactful, realizing that initial resistance often dissolves with deepening relationship.

4. People are drawn to a winner. Use your COTU to share ideas on why you believe this team is going to get into a community (or closed country), stay in, grow, make disciples, and see a reproductive community of believers come into being.

5. If you are in the process of drawing prospective team members onto your team, you should enlist their help in writing the COTU. The more input they have, the more ownership they will have. As part of the COTU, you should develop a one page team covenant which defines the relational expectations of the team and how conflicts will be resolved. After your team is formed, those added to the team will sign on to an already existing covenant. A Sample covenants can be found in appendix 5.

You may want to get ideas from some other team leader's COTUs. Feel free to plagiarize things that say what you want to say, but be careful not to include something that you don't

intend to provide or do on your team. In other words--don't plagiarize without thinking things through.

You may want to let potential team leaders know your strengths and weaknesses and how you see them complementing you. Why do you need a team in the first place? People need to be needed.

Specific questions an COTU should address:

1. Summarize briefly (a sentence or two): Where are you going? What is our specific target (people group, socio-economic segment, city, etc.)? Are there any non-negotiables in strategy? (This will be more thoroughly developed in your Strategy Paper).

2. What are some ways that you will be able to get employment for your team members? (Most will be tent makers).

3. Who makes life-style decisions? Where to live? Apartment? House? As single families or as a team? What do I have to agree to before I leave?

4. For those who are supported, how is the support level set? What does this level include? Just personal family needs or does it include ministry expenses? Will there be any funds pooled for team ministry? An emergency fund? Once a church is established, where will their giving be dispersed?

5. How are decisions made?

6. How is conflict to be resolved? What recourse is there if the conflict is with the team leader? (Put yourself in their shoes!)

7. What if I determine that I should not be there after arriving. What is the exit procedure? How soon can I leave? Is there a probation period?

8. If your COTU deals with cross-cultural church planting, will I be expected to learn language?

9. What skills am I expected to have before I get to your team? How do I really know that I am ready to go?

10. What about theological issues? Are there any theological non-negotiables such as charismatic leanings, etc.? What kind of person would be most comfortable on this team?

11. What happens if the team leader feels called to another area and leaves behind a remnant of the team?

12. What provisions are there for sickness, emergencies, vacations, leaves of absence?

13. Who is the team leader accountable to? How do our sending churches fit into our team's effort? Who is responsible for seeing that the work is kept in high profile in the sending church? What kind of coaching or mentoring are we going to get from outside the team?

14. Are there any restrictions on the team for the first year? (Visits home, vacation, training in other places?)

15. How do you envision team life? Will the team meet for worship? Prayer? Training? Socially? How often? Will there be differing roles for men and women? Will you accept single women on the team?

16. How will shepherding roles be set up? What if I have problems in my family? Who will I go to? Will there be discipling of younger members by older ones.   What if my wife is a member of the team with me, who is responsible to shepherd her? In what areas?

17.   What sort of reporting procedure will be followed? (to the home church, other agencies, etc.)

Appendix 3
Guidelines For Developing A Strategy Paper

The purpose of the strategy paper is to lay out a plan which your team will follow for seeing a cluster of reproducing churches established in the foreseeable future in your location. The strategy should not be seen as unchangeable. Indeed, as you progress in your attempt to plant the church , you will learn things that will cause you to adjust your strategy. It would be good to review your strategy paper every year or so to update it and to keep your team informed as to the present strategy.

The strategy should have steps along the way so that the actual progress toward the goal can be measured. A general outline giving some stages in planting the church, as well as a few steps for each stage is given the end of this paper. It is given to aid you, and you need not feel obligated to use any of it. The important this is to think for your ultimate target backwards to where you are and envision specific steps which will allow you to achieve that goal.

Below are some questions which are designed to get you to think more thoroughly about your approach. It includes questions on background as well as team issues which you may answer in a tentative fashion. Likely you will want to revise this after a year or so in the work.

A copy of your strategy paper should be given to your mentor so that your monthly progress can be tracked. Your copy may be lengthy, but we ask that you keep the strategy paper filed with your mentor to 4 or 5 pages. With this in mind, you may limit your mentor=s draft to #1, 2, 5, & 10 below. Please keep your mentor updated as your strategy is adjusted. Also be aware that your mentor is there to help you overcome obstacles to your progress through coaching and mentoring help. Keep this in mind as you answer #5, 6, & 9 below.

1.   What is the scope of your target? Are you pinpointing a social class or stratum, a people group, a language group, a profession, a city, a country?

2.   What is your mission? Summarize it succinctly as possible. Is your goal a single church? A reproducing church? A people movement? A cell church? A house church cluster? A church planting development center? Reproducing church planting teams?

3.   What has already happened among your target group? Are others working there? If so, what is your relationship with them? Is there radio or media efforts? What will be your relationship to the already existing churches in the area?

4.   What specific barriers do you envision will need to be overcome? What are your initial plans for doing so?

5.   What other help is available to you to achieve the mission? Make a list of books that bear on you plan, other people outside who could be of help to you (i.e. coaches, mentors, people from your home church, etc.). Remember that the other members of your team may help here. When new members come on, enlist their help to add to this list.

Evaluating Your Team=s Progress In Light Of The Strategy

6.   What resources has God given to you in your teammates? What are their strengths and weaknesses? What are the ways you use to assess them? How could God use them to accomplish the mission? Are they conscious of their place in God's plan? Are they content in it? What are you looking toward your mentor for?

7.   How could God use you to help develop your team mates? What underdeveloped gifts and abilities do you see potentially in them? What might prevent these from blossoming? What responsibilities will each have in team life? In the work?

8.   What is your role in the work? On the team? What do you need to help you complete that role? How is your wife a provision of God in this? Your mentor?

9.   What is your team missing to accomplish the task? How will you make do until God's provision is either sent or becomes evident?

10.   Outline the stages you would envision for the process of achieving your mission from entry of the team to exiting (This may be years or even decades. But should be included.). Try to distinguish stages and the steps within the stages. (See strategy summary which follows) Develop an expanded list of activities for the first couple of stages. As you achieve these stages, repeat it for the next couple of stages. Keep a log of how effective these activities were as you may be called on to help out other teams in the future. You might look at Appendix 10 for more help.

We are the church's investment in the extension of the Kingdom. We need to keep this in mind and not become content with no progress year in and year out. In the event of the lack of progress, we encourage you to first review your strategy with a view toward revising the specific activities within the stage at which you are struck. Your mentor is available to help.

Strategy Summary

The following is a summary of the stages for planting a network of reproducing house churches. Within each stage are a few steps which will help you get started. Each step will require fleshing out as you progress in your understanding of church planting. A more detailed list consisting of 7 phases with a more complete list of activities is available in the Church Planters Skills Checklist (Appendix 10).

STAGE 1: PREPARING TO REAP

1.   Team development: Getting to the field, recruiting a team, developing a vital team life while on the field.

2.   Language and culture: Learning these in such a way as to live productively in the

culture, and helping the team to do so. (Language learning may not be necessary unless you will be working with a particular cross-cultural group, none-the-less, you will have to learn about the culture of the people you target.)

3. Evangelism: Develop redemptive relationships and friendships ultimately leading to sharing the Gospel and seeing someone obediently follow Christ in baptism.

STAGE 2: GATHERING

1. Finding a key man or woman (man/woman of peace) around whom a group of people can be gathered.

2. Disciple this seeker/believer to live out Christ's life before his/her family and friends, sharing the Good News with them. Enable this person to study the Bible, understanding God's plan for the church, praying for the church to be established here.

3. The seeker/believer gathers family/friends to explore the Good News together through hearing & studying Bible stories. Some of these commit to Christ and desire to see a community established.

STAGE 3: ESTABLISH THE COMMUNITY (CHURCH)

1. 2 or 3 believers decide to follow Christ in community. They begin to meet regularly, learn how to love one another, celebrate the Lord's Table.

2. Some form of commitment (like a covenant) is determined to define membership.

3. Leaders begin to develop as they evangelize, baptize, and disciple new ones into the community. These leaders set the pace in godliness, in the home and in the community.

4. Peacemaking skills exercised in the community to resolve conflicts and maintain relationships.

5. Most of the church planters withdraw to start a new gathering, the remaining church planter takes a lower profile focusing on training the leaders.

STAGE 4: REPRODUCING THE COMMUNITY

1. Community focuses energies on reproducing a new community.

2. New leaders formally recognized. They learn to function as a team.

3. New leaders trained in home and church looking for character development. Lead meetings. Shepherd the community. Refine peacemaking skills. They take the initiative in developing new leaders.

4.   Reproduction begins. New meeting started. Leaders of the different groups network together.

<u>STAGE 5: EXITING</u>

1.   Vision for reproducing new churches motivates church life.

2.   Leaders ordained. They, in turn, recognize new emerging leaders (shepherding deacons) of new congregations and take responsibility for their development.

3.   Church planter redefines relationship to leaders as a resource person. Seeing new churches started without the church planter.

4.   Elders, possibly with church planter, lay hands on new elders in the newer community.

Appendix 4
Sample Team Covenant
COVENANT OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHURCH PLANTERS (RI)

The Fellowship of Church Planter is a church planting team which exist to plant reproducing churches in Rhode Island. This team does not exist under any group of churches nor any other mission organization. This church planting team exists to foster accountability, shepherding, and interaction between the members of this team and their families.

We see a church planting team as being similar to a college of elders, each a leader in his own right. Since we are independent we realize that we need mutual accountability. This covenant spells our the specific relationship of member of the team and the accountability we need from this team. We realize that we need to be humble toward each other since we are not infallible nor invulnerable to the devil's schemes. Paul speaks of the need for leaders to be mutually accountable to each other:

> "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit
> has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with
> His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in
> among you not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise,
> speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after themselves." Acts 20:28-
> 30

With this in mind we covenant to be on guard for each other in brotherly love.

SPECIFICALLY WE COVENANT:
To shepherd one another by being on the alert for any sin or activity of the flesh by which the Adversary could gain entrance or influence the working of teams. In the event of any such activity, we will approach the brother in the spirit of Matthew 18.   In the event that the brother continues in sin we will take the severe steps outlined in 1 Timothy 5 including publically reproving him to his sending church.

Recognizing that leaders may often sincerely and sharply disagree, we covenant to strive to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

WE COVENANT:
To strive to understand one another, seeking to accept differing views, to be slow to take offense, but always ready to forgive, securing reconciliation without delay when offenses and misunderstandings occur among us.

In the event that we find ourselves at an impasse we will find a wise mediator according to the admonition in 1 Cor. 6:1-7. If we are unable to do so we will submit to whatever mediator the team determines.

WE ALSO COVENANT:
To maintain the Christian disciplines of prayer, scripture reading, public assembly and

fellowship. To encourage the same on the part of the other team members and our families.

 WE FURTHER COVENANT:
To promote the cooperation of the various sub-teams within the team.

To actively and diligently encourage the churches we plant to grow in its relationship to the other churches planted by other teams and sub-teams and to diligently pray for their effective ministry.

To seek the well being of other churches and organizations around us seeking to help in anyway we are able.

In the event that we believe the Holy Spirit is directing us to change our calling (eg. moving geographically, stepping down from church planting, etc.) we will discuss this with the team before reaching any conclusion. We will also seek the counsel of our commissioning church. In the event we do leave we will endeavor to place ourselves under the protection of another church as soon as possible, return to our sending church, or become part of another team.

Appendix 5
Tentmaking verses Full Support

The following is an excerpt from a letter I wrote to an overseas missionary (we will call him Jim) who was struggling with the question "to make tents or not to make tents". The question has relevance to those working in the US as well since more and more tent makers are getting involved in the work of church planting. It further was driven by a sense of guilt often common when a westerner works in a developing country. Keep in mind that the majority of church planters we (FCP) work with are self supporting tentmakers. Many Frontiers church planters are bi-vocational, drawing some support in addition to working a job for some support (usually on a 2 time or less basis).

Dear Jim,

Several of the paragraphs of your last two faxes have expressed concern about job situation etc. I'd like to share some of the views I've developed over time as a supported servant of the Lord. These views come down to an appropriate view of calling.

As I mentioned last time, it is important for those who derive the bulk of their income from gifts (as opposed to holding a job) to realize that they are sacrificing their ability to be an example to the vast majority of believers. For the most part we feel such men should have a ministry limited to "equipping the saints for the work of the ministry" (Ephesians 4:12). That is, we believe only equippers should be supported, not ministers.

As such, each man needs to become fully persuaded as to what God has called him; has he been called as a minister or an equipper? This should further be confirmed by those outside of themselves. On our team here, the bulk of us are ministers, and thus have jobs to be good examples. I am the sole equipper at this point, although this will likely change as God expands the work. Mike and Jim, the two new team leaders are beginning to work through the issue of how this might affect their calling (Calling is not static, but dynamic, and may change as the needs for the expansion of His kingdom change). Both have been committed up to this point to minister and be good examples to the emerging leadership as self-supporting shepherds.

In your case, the men may decide that, at best, they can be a poor model for self-supporting leaders which are so essential for house churches, especially in a country like yours with so many needy people. In this case they should find ways to become bi-vocational if they are unable to be fully self-supporting.

But your men may also realize that they are better to consider themselves to be equippers of ministers. As such, they need to realize that they are not "experts" on what it would mean to be a self-supporting minister in that culture. Instead their ministry should be limited to coaching from the outside of the church, pointing out when practices would violate Biblical principles. The important thing to keep in mind is that the self-supporting minister must be the norm in a reproducing model of church life, especially in developing countries! The clerical model (full-time support as opposed to self-supporting--with the full time Aminister≅ seen as superior, more committed, etc.) creates bottlenecks and a two-tiered Christianity which is

destructive! Supported men need to realize that they have a limited ministry with respect to setting a good example for the future leaders.

If you do decide to be supported by the gifts of the saints, then obviously you must focus your prayers and attentions on getting men who can be good examples to the flock and getting them to understand their calling as ministers (as opposed to equippers of ministers) who can model the type of committed Christianity which will serve as a model to all the members of the assembly, balancing job, family and ministry. Likely some of these will eventually be called to a ministry of church planting which may (but not necessarily) cause them to have to reconsider the support issue, although many church planters should be either bi-vocational or tentmakers.

At any rate the question is should you view yourself? I would encourage you to face the reality that if you are supported you will not necessarily be a good model in this particular area to the sheep. I encourage you to really study the apostle Paul's life and ministry with respect to support. He spent somewhere between 1/2 to 3/4 of his time supported by others. He made no apology for receiving support, but rather labored all the more so that those who supported him could share in his reward (Phil. 4:15-18). He did not receive money from those he was presently ministering with (2 Cor. 7:2-4; 11:20,21; 12:14,15,etc), but was willing to receive gifts from them after he left (like Philippi). He was willing to labor according to what God provided; making tents, or receiving support from others (Phil 4:10-14) according to the need. I am sure he was accused of using the gospel as a means of gain, and has no problem condemning others who do so (2 Cor. 11:20)! Yet he acknowledges that this is not inappropriate necessarily (I Cor. 9:3-14). Following his thought into vs. 15-27 he is able to balance these because of a clear sense of calling! (For a good definition of calling Cf. I Cor. 7:17--God's assignments in life). He sees his calling as a stewardship given from God to be carried out for the expansion of the gospel and the good of God's people.

It is crucial for us to understand our calling! It is important for us to understand the evolution of our calling and be open to further evolution. I was called by God while single and a football coach. After God called me to His kingdom He called me to be married (this is the context of the definition of calling given in I Cor 7). As a result I had to give up my football job since it was incompatible with who I was, and who my wife was. I got a job teaching school and worked leading Bible studies on campus from the church. He confirmed gifts of teaching, discipling, and shepherding over the next 5 years. The last 2 years He confirmed me as an equipper of saints by allowing me to train guys to take over the campus ministry. Thus when the church asked me to leave teaching, be supported, and start a new church, it was a result of thinking of this as a good investment in the Kingdom (a la Phil. 4:17). Reluctantly I answered God's call and gave up my job.

I want to point out though, that although God's call was subjective (I had a burden to start Bible studies on campus), it was confirmed objectively by the fruits and others evaluation. I think it is important for us to be clear in our calling but also in how it has been and is being confirmed. Otherwise everyone can be a self-proclaimed prophet (See the warnings in 2 Cor. 10:12ff). Paul was called as an apostle to the gentiles (Acts 9). But it was confirmed on several occasions (Acts 13:1-4, Gal. 2:9). When our calling comes under question we may need to give an account of both calling and confirmation.

The Problem complicated by working in a poor country

God has called you and the others on your team to (a country) and that has been confirmed by your churches, your agency, and others. You need to be clear on what God has called you to bring. Most third world believers might think you have been called to bring affluence and comfort. But in reality you have been called to bring good news of a new kingdom which will result in much suffering and even death for those who follow. (Cf. Acts 14:22--how's that for comfort and encouragement).

YOU MUST ACCEPT THE CALL. And you must teach them that each one of our paths will be unique. (Often John 21:15-23 is extremely helpful here). But each path is uniquely suited to the one who follows because he has a loving Father who has drawn the path and will provide all that's needed (Habakkuk 3:17-19, especially v. 19). Each one's path will be more than he can bear in his own strength. Rather than looking at others who "appear" to have it easier (eg. Peter looking at John), we need to "follow Christ" ourselves, focusing on the path He has laid out for us.

The believers there may think of you as wealthy, but you need to relate that your sacrifice is one of leaving family and home to live in a new culture and bring them the good news. Another way of putting it is that the poverty you are called to endure is one of family rather than finances. God may not have called you to live at their economic level (He may have also, but you have to wrestle through this!) and you should not live in constant guilt over the fact that you may have more materially than they do. Each one has a path to follow. Most of those in your country of service would consider it a far greater sacrifice to leave family than to live in meager financial conditions. You have called to sacrifice in one way, they in another. You need to wrestle through these issues.

You need to be clear both on you calling and confirmation, to remain steadfast when Satan tries to discourage you from staying on the Lord's path for you. My confirmation to you is that you are where you belong and in the position you belong. But you will have to go through these issues often with yourself, your co-workers and those who will become leaders in the churches. This issue of calling is crucial for perseverance.

I have written at length because I sense your anguish. I hope I have not beaten the subject to death, but it is a very important issue.

Questions For Further Thought
1. What are the disadvantages of being fully supported as a church planter?

2. What are the advantages?

3. How is this contingent on calling?

4. What is your calling? What would be necessary for you to reconsider this?

Appendix 6
Calling
Study One: Definition

1. I Corinthians 7:17 (in context).
    A. How is Acall≅ defined here?

    B. In what way is Acall≅ like a diamond with different facets?

    C. What are the facets which make up your call? Divide these into **FIXED** (ones that are not easily changed with clear responsibilities from God and **Non-FIXED** (ones that we could change although it might take some work). A couple of illustrations are given to get you started:

FIXED (unchangeable)   **Non-FIXED** (not specifically commanded by God)
Walk with God   Sunday School teacher
Husband   Employee of _____

2. Philippians 3:4-7
    A. What were the facets of Paul=s pre-conversion life which impacted his call? (cf.. Acts 7:57-8:3, I Cor. 7:8 Paul was perhaps divorced or widowed.).

    B. Which of these may have been long term limitations on his ministry? Which would have augmented it?

    C. What things in you life may limit your ministry?

    D. Ph.. 3:8-14 What did these limitations cause Paul to do? Why?

    E. What things did Paul leave? What things did he retain?

3. As you look over your life, what has God sovereignly allowed to shape your call?
    A. What choices have you made which cannot be changed? How should they impact you working out your calling?

    B. Which of these can God use positively in you calling?

    C. What choices have you made which can be changed?

Have a time of prayer around Ps. 32:8,9 trying to see where you are in light of God=s plan.

Commit yourself to Ph.. 3:12-14

Study 2
The Nature of Calling

1. Mark 3:13-15
    A. Who took the initiative in calling the disciples?

    B. Why did He call His disciples?

    C. What was Jesus calling the disciples to?

    D. What was the priority in the calling?

2. Does this agree with Paul=s experience in Ph.. 3:7-10?
    A. In what ways to you think Paul was transformed by his calling?

    B. How did this happen?

    C. How did Paul=s experience of carrying out his calling lead him closer to Jesus?

3. 2 Corinthians 1:8-11. As you evaluate what you have done for the Kingdom to date, how has this affected your life?

    A. How much has it stripped away your own self- reliance?

    B. How much of it bears the supernatural touch of God?

    C. How much of it has brought you into contact with the living God? Isaiah 6:1-13

Have a good season of prayer as you evaluate your ministry in light of the living God and I Cor. 3:13-15, 4:5

Study 3
Your Kingdom Call

We have seen that calling consists of a number of facets. This week we will focus on one facet: your call in the kingdom.

1. I Corinthians 3:10-15
    A. What is Paul concerned about those he led to the Lord?

    B. Why was this such a concern?

    C. How does Mt. 6:33 fit into this? (vs. 34 might be crucial as well!)

    D. How about Ephesians 2:10?

    E. Does everyone have a call to build the kingdom?

    F. What have you been doing in building the Kingdom?

2. Romans 1:1, 5, 14, 16.
    A. What was Paul=s call?

    B. Where did it come from?

    C. How thoroughly was he committed to fulfilling his call? (Cf.. Ph.. 3:12)

3. What is your call? You might evaluate this from a couple of perspectives:
    A. What is your chief burden? (What has Jesus laid on your heart? What keeps you awake nights? What do you find yourself weeping over? What are you drawn back to over and over in prayer?)

    B. Who is your favorite Bible character? Why? What may this have to say about your calling?

    C. What do you see as your gifting?

    D. Where have you borne fruit?

    E. What do others say is your gifting?

It is good to keep in mind going back to Study 1 that calling is dynamic, not static. Obviously if one=s wife dies or divorces him, then that facet of calling changes. Likewise when children grow up and leave home this changes that facet of calling. Likewise a pastor could be called later to be a church planter and visa versa. Calling may change in the different seasons of life.

Study 4
Confirmation

1. Acts 9:10-19, 26:12-20.
     A. When did Paul receive his call?

     B. How did he receive his call?

     C. Do you think this is normative (Cf.. Ps. 32:8,9)?

     D. Can you think of any reasons why Paul might have been called in such a spectacular way?

2. Acts 11:23-26; 13:1-4. Paul had received his call to go to the gentiles perhaps 12 years before Acts 13.
     A. What did Paul do between his calling in Acts 11 and his confirmation by the church in Antioch in Acts 13?

     B . How were other people involved in this?

     C. How can this type of process of confirmation protect us from missing or corrupting our call?

     D. Look at some of the warning in Proverbs for those who would disregard this counsel

Although Paul=s call was spectacular it was perhaps 12 years before this calling was confirmed and he entered into it by going out on his first missionary journey from Antioch. One way to distinguish between calling and confirmation is to think of calling as internal and subjective (personally experienced), but confirmation is external and objective . Often confirmation comes from others outside of us who can perhaps see more clearly. Leadership is especially important for confirmation (Cf. Hebrews 10:17).

3. Acts 16:6-10 Gives us another example of the call of God to Paul confirmed by his team.
     A. Where did Paul think his team was called (v. 6,7)?

     B. Is it possible to be sincerely mistaken in our call?

     C. How did God redirect Paul?

     D. How was this confirmed (v. 10)?

4. Who has confirmed your calling? How? Do you have enough confirmation that even amidst severe trials you will stay the course? (2 Timothy 4:1-8) A good rule of thumb is that God will give confirmation to the degree that change must occur in the life.

Study 5
Reorienting your life around your calling

When God issues a call, it is a forgone conclusion that carrying out the call will transform your life. We must reorient our life around our calling, not try to fit our calling into our life with as little change as possible. Our calling (Latin *vocation*) needs to be paramount in our life (Cf.. Philippians 3:12, Ephesians 2:10). Certainly each of the disciples lives were radically altered by Jesus calling them to himself. But any time God issues a call, the persons life will have to be radically adjusted. Just look at ones like Jonah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, or any of those in the list in Hebrews 11. We will take Moses as our example.

1. Exodus 2:15-22 These verses cover about 40 years in Moses life from age 40 when he left Egypt to age 80 when he had the experience with the burning bush.
      A. What kind of life did Moses have in Median?
      B. Was he content?
      C. What parallels are there with your life?

2. Exodus 2:23-3:12
      A. What motivated God to call Moses?
      B. How did God approach Moses?
      C. What did He command Moses to do?
      D. What was Moses response?
      E. Why do you suppose he responded in this way?

3. Skim the rest of the call of Moses. Exodus 3:13-4:31
      A. How did God provide for Moses needs?
      B. What adjustments were necessary in Moses life to carry out this call?
      C. Did he face any trials from his family?
      D. What was his response?
      E. What hardships did he have to endure?

4. Make a list of the areas of your life which will be affected by you ruthlessly pursuing your call? (Hebrews 12:1)
      A. Who else will be affected by your single-minded pursuit of your call?
      B. How can you enlist them to support you in your (their) call?
      C. Work with someone to develop a step by step plan to enable you to fulfill your calling (Cf.. 2 Timothy 2:4; 4:1-7).

Study #6
Called to lead

If you are called into a leadership position this additional study is especially for you. In America good leaders are usually seen as ones who lead alone. This is not true in the New Testament. As a matter of fact leaders, by and large, worked in teams. This study will focus on the principles of working out your calling in team.

1. Acts 20:17,28-31 What are the benefits of elders functioning as a group as opposed to standing alone (like many modern western Apastors≅?)
   A. How might leaders fulfill the command in Hebrews 13:17? (Passages in this section can certainly be applied to church planters working on a team.)

   B. How could this help you as you work out your leadership calling?

   C. Acts 13:1-4 How did the leadership team function here to get direction from God?

   D. Acts 16:9,10 How did the team confirm the call?

   E. What would be the dangers of not having this type of team around you?

2. Acts 18: 1-8. Notice that Paul did not begin to minister in earnest in Corinth until he was joined by Silas and Timothy (v. 5). He waited until his team was with him before planting the church (v.8). Why was that?
   A. Paul always functioned in a team. What benefits do you think that brought him?

   B. Even Jesus functioned with a group of men. What benefits do you think that brought him?

3. Ephesians 4:11-16. How do the leadership gifts in v.11 function together to insure a complete, balanced, and mature body?

4. As you answer the call of God to be a leader, what kind of people do you need around you?
How should they be helping you? How will you need to change to accommodate them?

Have a time of prayer that God would provide a team of people for you. Has a team of leaders confirmed your call to leadership? If not pray that God would provide another leaders who could help you enter fully into your calling.

APPENDIX **7**

HARD TARGETS

by ADoc≅ a TL and mentor in the Middle East

This is a more in depth paper by a FCPI mentor serving with Frontiers.

My intention in this paper is to build upon and further work out the implications of Chapter 6, "Hard Targets," from the manual *Building Effective Church Planting Teams* (Dick Scoggins). I'll start with this word from the beginning of that chapter (I would recommend that the reader review the whole of that chapter, in conjunction with thinking about this paper):

> "If the *goal of reproduction at every level* (disciples, leaders, congregations, networks of congregations, church planters and church planting teams) is to be achieved, then *we must keep moving forward in all our efforts*. To develop individuals as well as teams, we have found it helpful to establish an evaluation process that uses Hard targets. Hard targets may be for individual team members or the team as a whole." (emphasis mine)

Hard targets should have several characteristics:

1. Hard Targets should focus on **movement** (growth) from one point to another, not on maintenance (or activities - see next point).[12] In thinking through ministry Hard Targets, one might ask, what is the next thing which needs to happen, in order for me (or for us as a team) to movement forward in the work? Examples of hard targets might include:

> * to progress from level 1 to level 2 on the LAMP (language learning) scale
> * to add 10 new people to my "outer circle" of relationships (or 2-3 new people to my "inner circle" of relationships)
> * to see 3 new people commit themselves to regular (evangelistic) Bible study
> * to see a person believe
> * to have 3 new team members sign our MOU and join our team
> * to see a group of believers covenant to become a church
> * to see leaders ordained in a group
> * to see leaders (or a church) reproduce

It is helpful to distinguish long-range from shorter-range Hard Targets. Hard targets can be seen to "fit" ("telescope") within each other, with shorter range HTs leading to longer range HTs (or, vice versa - with longer-range HTs being able to be broken down into short-range

---

[12] As Covey points out, "An effective goal focuses primarily on results rather than activity. It identifies where you want to be, and, in the process, helps you determine where you are. It gives you important information on how to get there, and it tells you when you have arrived..." (*The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, p. 137).

HTs). For example:
　　　* *to see a "Man of Peace" believe* is a clear short-range HT (i.e., it could be a 3-month HT), which is a step toward a slightly bigger or longer-range HT of
　　　* *seeing a gathering started* (through, perhaps even in the home of the MOP), which is a step toward an again slightly bigger/longer-range HT of
　　　* *seeing a church established* (e.g., via covenanting), which, together with the HTs of
　　　　　* (identifying, training, and) *appointing leaders*, and of
　　　　　* *seeing the house church reproduce*, is part of the bigger/longer-range HT of
　　　* *seeing a network of house churches established*, which is itself part of a bigger HT of
　　　* *seeing the network of house churches reproduce another network* (at which point you have arrived at the long-term goal of seeing a reproducing network of house churches established)

It is helpful to have the bigger picture in view, but it is also important to be able to aim at HTs which can be reached within 3-6 months (perhaps 12 at the outside), and to be able to define, and focus on reaching, the ***next*** (closest) point which needs to be reached (or next step which needs to be taken), in order to make movement toward the ultimate goal.

2. Hard targets should be accompanied by (and distinguished from) an ***activity (or action) plan*** which will help us reach the target. Once you have identified your Hard Targets, it is good to ask, what should I do to achieve them? what activities can I carry out in order to arrive at the HT?

The following are examples of activities which might help lead to achieving HTs, but which should *NOT* be taken as (i.e., mistaken with) hard targets:

　　　- to spend 30 min. per day reading the Arabic NT
　　　- to spend 5 hours per day (30 hrs. per week) talking with people
　　　- to share the gospel with 1 (2, 3, however many) people per day (week, etc.)
　　　- to have a group of believers meeting weekly (for whatever purpose)
　　　- to read a book per week on Islam

These should not be taken as HTs, but should be seen as measurable activities for achieving a HT. They in and of themselves do not define movement, and are not goals in and of themselves (i.e., simply to be undertaking such activities does not define success), but, if undertaken over time, should lead to movement toward a HT (i.e., should lead us to the accomplishment of that which defines success) - e.g., laying bricks may be an essential activity toward building a factory, and it may be helpful to have a plan for laying x number of bricks per day, but success is ultimately defined by finishing the building, not by carrying out the brick-laying plan.

If the HT, for example, is *to see a Man Of Peace (MOP) come to faith*, an activity plan might include:

　　　- to spend 20-25 hours per week sharing the gospel with potential MOP (which in itself needs to be defined, possible by clarifying the outer / middle / inner circle view of relationships, and determining on what basis to continue going deeper in relationship with

someone), which could be further broken down to include

> > - to seek a minimum of one good gospel-sharing opportunity per day
> > - to have 2-3 family interactions with M. families we know, per week
> > - etc.

> - to spend time each week working on developing new "nets" for "net fishing," i.e., new ways of having contact with larger numbers of people to seek to find spiritual interest
> - offering at least one "middle circle" friend each week an opportunity to move into my "inner circle" (e.g., through offering regular Bible study, Discovery course, etc.)
> - having at least 2 Bible study opportunities per week with people in my inner circle (seeking to move them toward the Kingdom)

If the HT is to move from level 2 to level 3 on the LAMP language proficiency scale, an activity plan might include:

> - working with a language helper 2 hours per day, 5 days per week
> - spending 30 minutes per day listening to recorded material on cassette
> - spending 30 minutes per day watching television shows in the local dialect
> - spending 4-5 hours per day, 6 days per week, using the language in interaction with local people (this in itself needs to be broken down into an achievable plan for where to find the people and spend time with them)

These activities should be appropriate (i.e., they can be undertaken by the person planning to do them, and have a good possibility of leading to the accomplishment of the HT) and measurable (I can tell, day by day, week by week, whether I've done them or not). I would call them a **plan** rather than *goals*, because if they are appropriate and realistic, there is no excuse for not carrying them out week by week (failure to meet them should be repented of, and "fruit in keeping with repentance" would entail carrying out the plan thereafter). It is vital, of course, that there be accountability, and that each person be held responsible for carrying out the plan which he has agreed to.

3. Hard targets should be **measurable**. In the same way that our activity plan is measurable, our HTs should be measurable. We need to be careful to avoid having vague or general goals like:

> * to become better in Arabic
> * to see someone come closer to Christ
> * to make 3 new friends
> * to learn about Islam
> * to adapt to the culture

Goals like these are *NOT* Hard (i.e., specific, clearly defined, firm) Targets - they are very fuzzy targets, with the pitfalls of (a) not helping me be crystal clear on what I'm aiming at, and (b) not allowing me to know whether or not I've actually hit the target. For all the examples of HTs given above (under points 1 and 2), one can measure whether or not they have been accomplished. Has a MOP come to faith? Has a group covenanted to become a church? Have leaders been appointed in a church? Have I attained a 3 level in language?

4. Hard Targets need to be **fixed to a specific point in time**. It does little good to have

measurable HTs if we have an open-ended time frame. I can never be said *not* to have accomplished my HT of seeing a MOP believe, if I never actually stop and assess whether it has hapat a particular point in time. Again, our goal is growth/movement, not just faithfully carrying out activities (however good they might be), and attaching specific dates to HTs has the benefits of (a) provoking us to activity, and to prayer and fasting, as we see a deadline approaching, and of (b) forcing us to evaluate, if we fail to accomplish the HT by the date set, why we failed (see point 7).[13]

5. Hard targets should ***require a stretch***. The statement, "you have not, because you ask not," has a parallel in much of life in the reality that "you attain little, because you attempt little." Hard targets should push us out of our comfort zone (this is related to the fact that they should move us forward - we should not be content with simply doing what we already can do, or with very little movement forward).

6. Hard targets should be ***attainable***, given our current position (in every respect - spiritually, past experience, etc.). Someone who has never run is not well-advised to take as his first HT in running, to run a marathon; someone who has never swum, to try to swim 5 miles; someone who has never climbed a mountain, to climb Everest; someone who has never planted one church, to plant 10 churches. (These may be fine longer-range HTs, but it is wise to start out with HTs which are within sight.) (This, of course, should be according to the working of God, and involves faith. But God himself has established the principle that a person must be proven faithful in little before he will be trusted with much; and faith like muscles grows with exercise, and is able over time to lay hold of increasingly greater "mountains.")

7. Hard targets (achieving them, making progress towards them) must be ***assessed***. If we fail to meet them in the time allotted, we need to evaluate, to seek to find out why. We need to ask, was it because our activities were faulty, and we need to try something different? because we failed to carry out our activity plan? because we need more time? Having carefully examined all of the possible causes for failing to reach our HT, we can then reset Hard Targets for the next period of time, and a revised activity plan for working toward them. In this way, God willing, we can continue to make forward progress in the work (having done all that we can, on the human side of things, to accomplish that which needs to be done).

---

[13] For a personal anecdote, I experienced the value of fixed dates in the process of researching and writing my PhD dissertation. To start with, I had three years in a north African country in which to learn enough Arabic (from scratch) to develop relationships and carry out the research which would be the basis of my dissertation--when the 3 years was up, and we returned to the U.S., that was it for the research. Then in writing the dissertation in 1986-87, I took as my goal (starting writing at the beginning of Oct.) to finish and graduate that year, which gave me a final deadline of something like mid-March, and allowed me a total of 22 weeks for writing the dissertation. In both cases, it was crystal clear what I had to accomplish, by what date, and having firm deadlines motivated me to work much harder than I would have otherwise, because of being "under the gun." (In both cases, I might add, I undertook these targets "in the Lord" - seeking His blessing and submitting them to His will, being ready to accept the fact that I might not have made those deadlines for one reason or another. But I was not willing not to make the deadlines because of some fault on my part - lack of hard work or organization or persistence, etc.)

NON-HARD TARGET GROWTH (LIFE PATTERNS)

There may be other "goals" for growth in various areas, especially over time, which are not necessarily specifiable in terms of Hard Targets, and which may in fact be more easily defined in terms of the activities which will help us to grow in a desired direction.

Examples:

        * to read 3 chapters per day in the Arabic NT, in order to (toward the goal of) continue to grow in familiarity, fluency, etc.
        * to swim 30 minutes 3 times per week, in order to stay in good physical condition
        * to play with my children x number of times per week for x number of minutes, in order to have regular fun time with them (as part of building positive relationship, etc.)
        * to read a book a month about a particular topic (Islam, leadership, etc.), in order to be learning and growing in understanding of that (those) topic(s)

Perhaps this area is best thought of in terms of "life patterns for health and growth." It is important to maintain such patterns, and to specify them as part of our continued process of evaluation and goal-setting.

At the beginning point, when a person does not have a pattern established, a Hard Target might be to establish such a pattern by a specific point in time. Once the pattern is established, however, maintaining it (though important as a practice for overall continued growth) is *not* considered a Hard Target.

Appendix 8
Sample Mentoring Covenant

This mentoring covenant is between a team leader (Bruce) in Marshfield, MA and Jim Frost the mentor and a team leader of a R.I. team.

FELLOWSHIP OF CHURCH PLANTING TEAMS
COVENANT OF TEAM LEADERS
MISSION IMPACT PARTNERS

What , after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe--as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I have planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are all God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.
 I Corinthians 3:5-9

A. FOUNDATION

Believing that God desires a healthy and humble interdependence between the various groups co-laboring for His Kingdom , as representatives of independent church panting teams, we humble commit ourselves to develop ongoing cooperative efforts between ourselves, other churches, mission agencies and especially those teams who make up the Fellowship of Church Planting Teams. We hold the resources that God has granted to our teams as not being our exclusive property but rather belonging to God to be used as He sees fit. To this end we commit ourselves to:

1. Foster ongoing communication with the FCP through Jim Frost.

2. Seriously consider the resources God has provided for us as potential provision for other team needs. We will pray over sharing resources with other teams such as:

    A. Coaching: a church planter from our team may visit other teams in need.

    B. Interning: church planters from other teams may be invited to spend time with our team.

    C. Reassigning team members: God may direct members from our team to go out with another team.

    D. Financial: if another team has a financial emergency we would encourage other teams to consider a gift.

3. In the case where God would direct the Marshfield team to remove itself from ongoing relationship with the Fellowship of Church Planting Teams, Bruce (TL) will inform Jim (mentor) who will make that decision known to the other participating teams.

Building Teams

B.   PRINCIPLES UPHELD IN PARTNERSHIP

1. Focus on building mutually beneficial relationships between the teams.

2. Strive to encourage each to fulfill their dream for the expansion of the Kingdom.

3. Extending the Kingdom by reproducing congregations.

4. Respects the autonomy of each team, but strives to develop a healthy interdependency.

5. Supports clear and consistent communication with the goal of sharing resources between teams.

6. Pray regularly for each other.

7. Persevere until the mutual mission objectives are fulfilled.

C.   COVENANTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Fellowship of Church Planters through Jim Frost:

1. Will provide training materials and offer seminars on these materials upon request.

2. Will schedule coaching visits to the Marshfield team for the purpose of ongoing equipping both in the cognitive and practical aspects of church planting.

3. Will evaluate and respond to monthly reports submitted by Bruce Davis to Jim Frost.

4. Will provide individualized training for church planters through internship programs, upon request.

5. Will help the Marshfield team reproduce new teams, some of which may be sent out to cross cultural fields with the purpose of penetrating new people groups both locally and abroad.

6. Will be available for missions conferences and other missions promotions.

7. Will be available for mediation in conflicts, if requested. If agreement cannot be reached in a dispute between Bruce and Jim, the matter can be arbitrated in accordance with I Corinthians 6, the arbitrator being another mutually agreed upon person.

8. Will review this covenant with Bruce at the end of 2 years.

Marshfield team through Bruce Davis:

1. Will make visits to Rhode Island for the church planting conference, when possible. As the work progresses, to give workshops during the conference.

2. Will write hard targets every six months.

3. Will send reports on these hard targets to Jim Frost by the last of each month.

4. Will send quarterly reports which may be published in the Church Planting Bulletin.

5. Write a Covenant of Team Understanding (COTU)

6. Write a Strategy Paper.

7. Fill out the Church Planter's Checklist and send a copy to Jim Frost to be reviewed annually.

Signatures:

Appendix 9
Church Planter's Skills Check List

This list is designed to enable Church Planters to determine where they need to grow and what they already know/can pass on. It is based on the Frontiers 7 phases of church planting. A such it was developed for pioneer church planters in a cross language/culture field. This is the major difference for the additional 2 phases added from the Appendix 3: Writing a Strategy Paper.

For each item in the checklist, place the number which most nearly reflects your level of competence.   We would recommend a church planter reviewing this every few years to track his progress. Likewise this list can be used when accepting new team members or interns to see where they will need further training. Use the following numbering scheme:

0   =   I have not done this task

1   =   I am learning to do this task

2   =   I have done this task adequately

3   =   I can help others learn to do this task

4   =   I have helped others to do this task

Phase 1 Launching the Team (Usually pre-field)

        research a target people

        develop a vision statement

        develop a Memo Of Understanding (MOU)

        develop a Strategy Paper

_____get church approval and support

_____ develop an adequate prayer and financial base

_____recruit a team

        enable team members to secure adequate prayer, financial support

_____enable team to embrace the vision and strategy for planting churches

_____resolve conflicts arising within your home which may arise from calling, moving,

Phase 2 Preparing to Sow (on field)

_____survive: implement entry strategy, secure housing, etc.

_____develop godly conflict resolution skills in family and team (Peacemaking)

_____develop a team life which will spiritually sustain team members

        resolve conflicts arising within the team on issues of vision/strategy, culture
adjustment
_____get comfortable with culture and language

_____enjoy life in the country

_____enable family to enjoy living in the country

_____develop friendships with target persons

        enable family members to develop relationships with target persons

        enable team mates to develop relationships with target persons

_____develop character by adapting personally, family, and team to the new culture

        bring redemptive elements naturally into these relationships

Memorize parts of the Word (verses, stories, parables) in target language

Phase 3 Sowing

     discover or develop evangelistic tools for your target people

     learn to share key Biblical truths in the target language

_____prayerfully evaluate your friend as a perspective man/woman of peace

_____identify one or more potential men/women of peace

_____model Christ's life before this person

_____see a sympathy for the gospel develop in the friend

     develop a strategy for reaching receptive people and their social network

     start a Bible Study with the friend (<u>e.g</u>. using the ADiscovery Course≅)

     see the Bible study grow to include other friends

_____lead someone into following Jesus

_____baptize the friend

Phase 4:   **Discipling (Gathering)** Disciple a seeker/believer to:

_____share God's plan for starting Kingdom communities with family/friends

_____gather a group of seekers/believers who embrace God's plan for community

_____understand the place of suffering in the Christian life (I Peter)

_____learn Bible stories which will impact life practices

_____respond to sin by repentance and developing new patterns of life

_____live out Christ's life in the extended family (eg. Matthew 5-7)

_____develop godly patterns of in marriage: including resolving conflict, forgiveness

_____develop godly patterns of child rearing

_____share the good news with family & friends

_____use a plan for personal Bible study

_____begin to identify disciples gifts and calling in the Kingdom

_____implement godly patterns of conflict resolution with you, the Church planter

_____become familiar with God's plan for the extension of the Kingdom in Acts

_____Women Church Planters shepherd women in Titus 2:3-5 skills

Phase 5: Establishing the Community (Church)

Community Development

_____Get 2 or 3 believers to agree to follow Christ in the community of the church

_____older believers determine appropriate way for membership in the community

_____the older believers understand the Biblical "one anothers" which define community

_____the community has become identifiable (eg. has covenanted)

_____the community is celebrating the Lord's Supper

_____the believers are doing the work of evangelism with their family, friends

_____older believers have baptized new believers

_____older believers discipling new believers

_____older women teach newer women Titus 2 skills

_____community meetings organized

_____older believers trained to lead community meetings

_____older believers are presiding at the Lord's Supper

_____initial leaders emerging, functioning as shepherds

growth in godliness in the home of emerging leaders set the pace for the community

_____differing gifts encouraged and developed for edification

Peacemaking Skills *exercised by the community*

_____forbearing and forgiving

_____confronting, exhorting, reproving erring members

_____shunning and disfellowshipping those persisting in sin

reconciling yet helping the erring one be transformed through restitution

Phase 6: Leadership Development

_____withdrawal of most of the church planters from meetings

_____withdrawn church planters focus on starting new gatherings

_____remaining church planter(s) take(s) lower profile in meetings

_____intense teaching on reproducing communities

_____community embraces goal of reproducing

_____members begin to look for new men/women of peace around whom to start another community

_____emerging male leaders recognized (e.g. provisional elders)

_____older women leaders recognized (eg. deacons)

_____conflicts arising from leadership appointment resolved

_____meetings of leaders begin with church planter present, team spirit develops

_____leaders initiate shepherding which leads to church discipline cases

New Leaders Training *becomes the primary task of the church planter*

_____character developed in context of marriage

_____team leadership concepts taught and implemented

_____discerning the will of the Lord by leaders and community, taught and practiced

_____leaders place in conflict and peacemaking within the community taught and practiced

_____leaders looking for new people to develop as leaders

_____leaders begin discipling new leaders (see Discipling, Phase 4)

_____church planter often absent from community meetings, leaders take responsibility

_____church planter absent from leadership meetings

_____leaders ordained (eg. as elders)

Phase 7: Reproducing and Exiting

_____vision developed for planting new churches in the local area

_____vision includes recognizing, training and sending church planters to other cities
        & countries

_____vision given by leaders to congregation

_____new gatherings started or owned by church (if started by other church planters)

_____leaders begin to network with emerging leaders of new gatherings taking some
        responsibility for their training

_____new community started

_____communities concerned for each other, resources shared

_____peacemaking skills among leaders practiced

_____leaders formally recognizing newer emerging leaders (eg. deacons)

_____leaders of the two communities start meeting regularly

_____elders take more responsibility to develop leaders in the new community

Withdrawal of Church Planter from individual church with focus on the network of churches

_____responsibilities between church planters and elders defined for new community

_____church planter commends old community to God and leaves community
        meetings but may visit on occasion

_____church planter redefines relationship to leaders as coach, attending leadership
        meetings only when invited

_____elders (with church planter) lay hands on new elders in the newer community

_____relationship between communities and leaders worked out and formalized (eg.
        covenant, understandings, etc)

_____peacemaking skills between communities and leaders communities exercised

_____new churches started without a church planter

_____church planters sent out either with first team or with other teams

_____new clusters of communities started

_____indigenous church planting teams sent out