

Church Planting Overview

Rev. Dr. Don L. Davis

EVANGELIZE

How to PLANT a Church

Mark 16:15-18 (ESV) And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. [16] Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. [17] And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; [18] they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover."

- I. **P**repare – *Luke 24:46-49 (ESV) and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, [47] and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. [48] You are witnesses of these things. [49] And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."*
 - A. Form a church-plant team.
 - B. Pray.
 - C. Select a target area and population.
 - D. Do demographic and ethnographic studies.

- II. **L**aunch – *Galatians 2:7-10 (ESV) On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised [8] (for he who worked through Peter for his apostolic ministry to the circumcised worked also through me for mine to the Gentiles), [9] and when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. [10] Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.*
 - A. Recruit and train volunteers.
 - B. Conduct evangelistic events and door-to-door evangelism.

Ephesians 4:11-16 (ESV) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, [12] to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [14] so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. [15] Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, [16] from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

III. **A**ssemble – *Acts 2:41-47 (ESV) So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. [42] And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. [43] And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. [44] And all who believed were together and had all things in common. [45] And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. [46] And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, [47] praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

- A. Form cell groups, Bible studies, etc. to follow up new believers, to continue evangelism, and to identify and train emerging leaders.
- B. Announce the birth of a new church to the neighborhood and meet regularly for public worship, instruction and fellowship.

IV. **N**urture – *1 Thes. 2:5-9 (ESV) For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed— God is witness. [6] Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. [7] But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. [8] So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us. [9] For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.*

- A. Develop individual and group discipleship.
- B. Fill key roles in the church: identify and use spiritual gifts.

EMPOWER

Acts 20:28 (ESV) Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

Acts 20:32 (ESV) And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

- V. **T**ransition – *Titus 1:4-5 (ESV) To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. [5] This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—*
- A. Transfer leadership to indigenous leaders so they become self-governing, self-supporting and self-reproducing (appoint elders and pastors).
 - B. Finalize decisions about denominational or other affiliations.
 - C. Commission the church.
 - D. Foster association with World Impact and other urban churches for fellowship, support, and mission ministry.

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PREPARE

- Form a church-plant team.
- Pray.
- Select a target area and population.
- Do demographic and ethnographic studies.

LAUNCH

- Recruit and train volunteers
- Conduct evangelistic events and door-to-door evangelism

EQUIP

ASSEMBLE

- Form cell groups, Bible studies, etc. to follow up new believers, to continue evangelism, and to identify and train emerging leaders.
- Announce the birth of a new church to the neighborhood and meet regularly for public worship, instruction and fellowship.

NURTURE

- Develop individual and group discipleship.
- Fill key roles in the church; identify and use spiritual gifts.

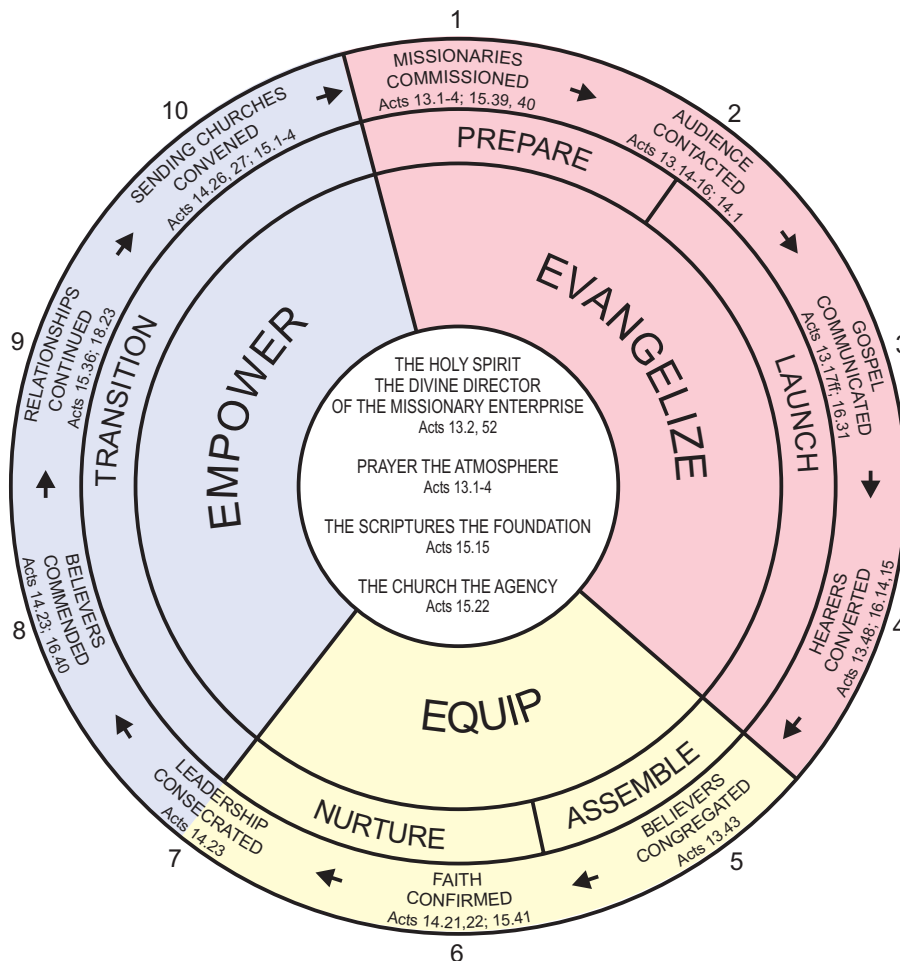
EMPOWER

TRANSITION

- Transfer leadership to indigenous leaders so they become self-governing, self-supporting and self-reproducing (appoint elders and pastors).
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Pauline Precedents From Acts: The Pauline Cycle

1. Missionaries Commissioned: Acts 13.1-4; 15.39-40. Ga. 1.15-16.
2. Audience Contacted: Acts 13.14-16; 14.1; 16.13-15; 17.16-19.
3. Gospel Communicated: Acts 13.17-41; 16.31; Rom. 10.9-14; 2 Tim. 2.8.
4. Hearers Converted: Acts. 13.48; 16.14-15; 20.21; 26.20; 1 Thess. 1.9-10.
5. Believers Congregated: Acts 13.43; 19.9; Rom 16.4-5; 1 Cor. 14.26.
6. Faith Confirmed: Acts 14.21-22; 15.41; Rom 16.17; Col. 1.28; 2 Thess. 2.15; 1 Tim. 1.3.
7. Leadership Consecrated; Acts 14.23; 2 Tim. 2.2; Titus 1.5.
8. Believers Commended; Acts 14.23; 16.40; 21.32 (2 Tim. 4.9 & Titus 3.12 by implication).
9. Relationships Continued: Acts 15.36; 18.23; 1 Cor. 16.5; Eph. 6.21-22; Col. 4.7-8.
10. Sending Churches Convened: Acts 14.26-27; 15.1-4.



The "Pauline Cycle" terminology, stages, and diagram are taken from David J. Hesselgrave, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2000).

"Evangelize, Equip, and Empower" and "P.L.A.N.T." schemas for church planting taken from *Crowns of Beauty: Planting Urban Churches Conference Binder* (Los Angeles: World Impact Press, 1999).

Ten Principles of Church Planting

1. **Jesus is Lord.** (Matt. 9.37-38) All church plant activity is made effective and fruitful under the watch care and power of the Lord Jesus, who Himself is the Lord of the Harvest.
2. **Evangelize, Equip, and Empower unreached people to reach people.** (1 Thess. 1.6-8) Our goal in reaching others for Christ is not only for solid conversion but also for dynamic multiplication; those who are reached must be trained to reach others as well.
3. **Be inclusive: whosoever will may come.** (Romans 10.12) No strategy should forbid any person or group from entering into the Kingdom through Jesus Christ by faith.
4. **Be culturally neutral: Come just as you are.** (Colossians 3.11) The Gospel places no demands on any seeker to change their culture as a prerequisite for coming to Jesus; they may come just as they are.
5. **Avoid a fortress mentality.** (Acts 1.8) The goal of missions is not to create an impregnable castle in the midst of an unsaved community, but a dynamic outpost of the Kingdom which launches a witness for Jesus within and unto the very borders of their world.
6. **Continue to evangelize to avoid stagnation.** (Romans 1.16-17) Keep looking to the horizons with the vision of the Great Commission in mind; foster an environment of aggressive witness for Christ.
7. **Cross racial, class, gender, and language barriers.** (1 Cor. 9.19-22) Use your freedom in Christ to find new, credible ways to communicate the Kingdom message to those farthest from the cultural spectrum of the traditional church.
8. **Respect the dominance of the receiving culture.** (Acts 15.23-29) Allow the Holy Spirit to incarnate the vision and the ethics of the Kingdom of God in the words, language, customs, styles, and experience of those who have embraced Jesus as their Lord.
9. **Avoid dependence.** (Eph. 4.11-16) Neither patronize nor be overly stingy towards the growing congregation; do not underestimate the power of the Spirit in the midst of even the smallest Christian community to accomplish God's work in their community.
10. **Think reproducibility.** (2 Timothy 2.2; Phil. 1.18) In every activity and project you initiate, think in terms of equipping others to do the same by maintaining an open mind regarding the means and ends of your missionary endeavors.

Resources for Further Study

- Cornett, Terry G. and James D. Parker. *“Developing Urban Congregations: A Framework for World Impact Church Planters.”* World Impact Ministry Resources. Los Angeles: World Impact Press, 1991.
- Davis, Don L. And Terry G. Cornett. *“An Outline for a Theology of the Church.”* Crowns of Beauty: Planting urban Churches (Training Manual). Los Angeles: World Impact Press, 1999.
- Hesselgrave, David J. *Planting Churches Cross Culturally: A Biblical Guide.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2000.
- Hodges, Melvin L. *The Indigenous Church: A Handbook on How to Grow Young Churches.* Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1976.
- Shenk, David W. And Ervin R. Stutzman. *Creating Communities of the Kingdom: New Testament Models of Church Planting.* Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1988.

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