

MODULE 2:

Church Planting Principles



This module aims to communicate the key principles and steps required to successfully plant a new congregation in a local community. The objectives of these units are to equip the student in a future participation (as a team leader or not) to a new church plant.

This section will be structured in 8 e-learning units and each of them will include readings, online classes and discussions around significant questions in relation to the topic. The focus of these units is on understanding the root of church plant, the different existing models and practical examples in order to start a church plant on biblical basis.

Unit 1: The Strategic Importance of Church Planting

The church around the world is growing numerically faster than it has ever grown before. One of the consequences of this dramatic growth has been to change the composition and distribution of the church such that: the majority of Christians are now from the non-white majority, the poor majority, well balanced between the southern and northern hemispheres, and found in nearly every nation on earth. Most of this growth has taken place in dynamic relationship to the growth of church planting movements. Unless those who have been evangelized have become part of a church, then conversion growth is not maintained. Often the very mechanism for evangelistic endeavor has been a strategic and intentional attempt to plant new churches. In this sense, church planting can be identified as the single most effective means of proclaiming the gospel.

Unit 2: What are we Planting?

Church planting is not an automatic panacea for all the ills of the church. Wrongly approached, church planting can be a sectarian diversion of resource and energy.

Particularly because we live at a moment in time when the culture of the west is undergoing significant if not tumultuous change, it is essential that we do not replicate the failed structures of the past. We must be ready to plant churches with a missional DNA at its core.

Unit 3: Church Planting Models

Church-planting models fall into two broad categories. The first category covers a variety of models which have a relationship with an existing local church, or group of local churches, which acts in some capacity as a sending church. The second category describes churches that are planted as a consequence of a denominational church-planting strategy, acting independently of an existing local church, or those which begin as a result of an entirely independent initiative. Each of these models has its own strengths and weaknesses.

Unit 4: Building a Team

The precise time scale and manner in which your team is built will be largely predicated by the church planting model that has been chosen. But no matter what model is used, the same team processes need to be employed before a church plant can be said to be established. This unit will focus on these processes.

Unit 5: Locating the Church Plant

The precise process by which church planters select locations for their church plant are to some extent all unique. Each church plant has its own story which reflects the astonishing creativity of the Spirit of God. But having acknowledged that truth, it is also the case that there are a number of basic underlying factors which can be identified.

Unit 6: Actual Launch

The launch of a church plant, i.e., conducting regular public worship, represents a significant moment in the history or narrative of a church plant. In a previous unit, we have reviewed the need for the team to be “big enough” before going public, but there are a huge number of pressures on a planting team to get to a public launch. Some of those pressures come from individuals in the team who have a degree of expectancy about public worship. Some will come from sponsors who can feel that not much has happened until a regular worship service is in place. These pressures must be resisted until the group is ready. Key issues must be resolved before the public launch.

Unit 7: Seminar: Conversation / Interview with a Church Planter

Unit 8: The Multiplication Factor

Just as evangelism can take place on either an addition or a multiplication model, so the same is true with church planting. We can either plant one church that mirrors an existing church culture or we can plant the kind of church that will in turn plant churches. Churches that plant churches have the potential to create a movement. In this unit, we will discuss how we go about that kind of church planting?