

What You are Called to Do

Objectives

1. Identify and describe who you anticipate reaching.
2. Identify needs you are uniquely called to respond to and the way you will respond to those needs.
3. Determine the essential ministries your new church will offer to meet the needs of the lost.

Biblical Foundations

God's Call to a Community

Jesus had a clear mission. While in the large scope of things His mission was to the world (John 3:16); his three and a half years of public ministry focused on a specific group of people, in a specific area.

The church also has a large mission (Matthew 28:19-20). One local church cannot by itself “go into all the world.” At the same time, God gives a specific assignment for a baby church. Each assignment is unique as to the location and approach; but it is to have the same outcome. As you fulfill your mission, and others fulfill their mission, the church impacts the entire world.

The inability to “go into all the world” and get the job done alone should eliminate you from fretting about someone else wanting to start church in the same community you are working in. The more local churches there are the more people who will go to Heaven. Be kingdom-minded! The person starting a church across town, or across the street, will reach people you would never evangelize. Church planters must not be territorial; do not become territorial later either.

A Kingdom Mindset

Respond to the following questions:

Why might having several churches in your city, community or area be more “kingdom” effective than just one?

What sort of people might you be unable to reach with your personal approach to evangelism and pastoral ministry?

Is it possible that someone else could effectively pastor people who you cannot pastor?
What sort of people would be hard for you to pastor?

Your mission - Clarified

Mission is driven by the needs of people being ministered to. Mission focuses on God's desire to save people. Mission is about the people God has called us to serve.

Having a clear mission answers three questions:

- "Who am I called to reach?"
- "What needs of these people am I uniquely qualified to meet?"
- "How will we meet these needs?"

The Poor

As you consider your mission do not ignore any segment of the community. A great opportunity is found among the poor of North America. Poverty is here on our relatively prosperous continent. In the United States

- The official poverty rate for 2012 is 15 percent, up from 12.1 percent in 2002.
- A total of 46.2 million people were in poverty, up over 11 million from 2002.
- For children under 18, the poverty rate rose to 22 percent in 2012 up from 17.6 in 2003-
- The poverty rate in central cities was 17.5 percent, compared to 12.1 percent in metropolitan areas and 9.1 percent outside central cities.

The poor you have always and the poor, particularly blue collar working class poor are a great mission field. Many churches have been built reaching for the poor and working poor. Few churches have been established targeting the upper end of society.

Redeem and Lift

One of the great concepts for growing a church is called "Redeem and Lift." God redeems the poor, the social outcast and misfit while they are in their sin . . . and, yes, in their poverty a church planter's first converts are not usually doctors, bankers and part of the social register. Those who are "up and out" will often come only after a church ministers to the "down and out."

Something interesting happens after God saves the drug addict, the homeless fellow or the young lady the pastor's wife picks up for Sunday school. After God redeems them

from their sin they are lifted from their poverty. Evangelist Matt Maddix has expressed it, “You reach for those nobody wants and God will send you those that everybody wants.” Church planters need to get off their sophisticated high horse and go bring a few people who smell really rank to church. Pick them up in your car . . . go sit down and eat with them after church. If you’ll reach for the “down and out” God will eventually send you the “up and out.” Truly, the poor we have with us always. The disadvantages are often the most receptive to the gospel.

Describe Your Mission

Note: To get the most out of this effort, you will need to devote several days to the items listed below. In most cities, city planners gather extensive data about their own city. This helps them attract businesses to their community. Usually they are prepared to share this information with anyone who asks for it. Contact the Chamber of Commerce or the local library for this information.

1. What do you know about the people you are called to reach? Paul wrote, “To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews . . . to the weak I became weak” (1 Corinthians 9:19-22). Describe the community you are going to reach:
 - Size of the community
 - Ethnic makeup, gender, language considerations
 - Cultural distinctions
 - Natural connections that can be made between the community and the church

- Do you have friendships with people in this community now?

What specific people or groups were Paul, the Twelve, and Simon Peter called to reach in the passages below? What needs were they called to meet? How did they meet those needs?

- Paul - Acts 26:16-18
- The Twelve – Matthew 10:5-10
- Simon Peter – Galatians 2:7

What needs of the people are you called to meet? Describe in detail the needs of the people in your community. Be sure to describe how you decided these needs exist. List the names of people you have talked to, periodicals you examined or literature you read, etc.

- What needs do people “feel” strongly about? How do you know?
- What are their spiritual needs? How do you know?
- What are their physical needs? How do you know?

- What are their lifestyle needs? (Examples: debt management, marriage training, divorce recovery, Alcohol Chemical Training Series) How do you know?

- What are their emotional/relational needs? How do you know?

Describe how you will respond to those needs. How are you uniquely qualified to meet these needs?

- How will you build personal relationships with the people you have described?

- Will you have small group ministries? If so, why?

- What do you anticipate happening in your church services? What needs will the services meet for the people of the community?

- Will you have any specialized ministries? List and describe them.

- What community partnerships with local agencies like human services, law enforcement, homeless shelters, etc., will you have? Why?

Exercise

Drawing from your research on the previous pages, answer the following questions.

1. Describe the people you are called to reach. List one characteristic at each bullet.

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2. What are the specific needs the church you may birth is called by God to meet? (You cannot accomplish all of them, so which specific ones are you to accomplish?) Pray about the full range of needs you have noted above and listen for God's direction. Don't be surprised if you are somewhat overwhelmed at the broad spectrum of needs. You do not have it in you to do all the things that need to be done. You may focus on a simple target at first.

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3. How will you meet those specific needs?

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Your Ministries

Ministries defined

Ministry might be better called serving. Children’s evangelist Lloyd Squires said the sign outside the pastor’s door should say, “Chief Servant.” Ministries are plans developed to meet the needs of the people God has called us to reach. Ministry is the action that carries out the plan. It is having a strategy to accomplish the mission.

Exercise

List some essential ministries you believe will meet the needs of the people God may call you to serve. List the specific needs you identified and give a proposed ministry that is a way to meet those needs. Ministry can be as simple as inviting people to dinner. Do you know someone who is now effectively using that ministry?

Need	Ministry	Now Using

Lifestyle evangelism or reaching people in your personal sphere of influence is the most effective way to reach people for Jesus Christ. Lydia’s household and the Philippian jailer’s household were won because of such connections. Make use of this principle.

Research the Greek word “oikas” and determine its relevance to what you are called to do.

Birthing a baby church is too dangerous to try without a secure sense of God's call. On occasion, mothers dive into child birth. Too often those who set out to birth a church do not survive – nor does their baby church. Church planters face several difficulties.

Difficulty #1: Church planting is hard work. Management guru Peter Drucker labels it as the hardest of jobs.

Difficulty #2: Materialistic measures of success produce struggle in the missionary and the missionary's family.

Difficulty #3: Church planters are highly visible. Your peers and family will always know the score. If you were at a distant site, only a few people would be aware of any setbacks you experienced.

Difficulty #4: Unrealistic expectations. Your expectation of a ready audience may not happen. Often you will have to create an audience.

What Kind of Church Planter Are You?

For this conversation there are two kinds of church planters:

- The Long-Term Planting Pastor
- Career Church Planter

Long Term Planting Pastor

This person plants one or two churches in their lifetime. Wayne and Janet Trout, Royce Andrus, and Jack Cunningham are such people. This is the person who enjoys the work as the church develops. They are generally in a city for the long haul.

Career Church Planters

Through the years, this ministry has often gone unrecognized and under-appreciated. The late Leaman Reynolds, Scott Sistrunk, Jack Yonts, Dan Parker and the Apostle Paul were career planters. The longest Paul stayed anywhere was three years. Yet his life work made a huge impact.

A career church planter enjoys the birthing of a new work . . . and in transitioning that work to someone else's care. Their enjoyment is not in the ongoing process of pastoring. The Career Church Planter gets bored or restless as a work becomes more established.

List three long-term planters you are aware of:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Name two people who planted at least three churches in their lifetime.

1. _____
2. _____

Why do you suppose the "career church planter" has not gained much significance?

What God is going to require of you may not be clear in your mind right now, one always takes things one step at a time.