

# Establish

by Jimmy Toney

Webster defines the word 'establish' as:

1. To bring into existence
2. To make firm or stable
3. To cause to grow and multiply

These three definitions will become the three points that I base my teaching from ...

## **I. To Bring into Existence**

Church planting is a great endeavor! You have the opportunity to bring something supernatural, eternal and life changing into existence. You have the privilege and responsibility of walking into a city with either no Apostolic presence or a minimal Apostolic presence and bring God's glory into that region.

You have embarked upon the greatest calling and challenge in the world ... establishing an Apostolic church.

It is very important that we understand that our job is not to compete with another church of the same or different denomination. We are to bring into existence God's church to that particular area. The other churches are not producing what an Apostolic church produces, if they were, there would be no need for you in that city. Do not be mesmerized by the 'giants' in the land! If God is for us...then who can be against us!

So how do I bring a church into existence? You first of all must develop a burden for your city. I define a burden as a sincere love and appreciation for something that will make you change your lifestyle to accommodate what you have a sincere love for. If we view our cities/towns as a poor, small, insignificant community then we will never develop a correct burden to reach that community. I like the way the children of Israel described the promise land in Numbers 14:6-9. They said, "It is an exceeding good land." If we are going to bring into existence an Apostolic church then we must view our field of labor as an exceeding good land.

Secondly, we must develop a strategy to plant the church. This strategy will consist of everything from what time to have service, to where to have service, to when to have service and how frequently to have service. It might also consist of how to develop a team (of which I highly recommend); how to evangelize the community and how much money you will need to launch. If there is not a well thought out plan then a successful launch is merely a dream.

Finally, we must develop a plan to be implemented after the plant. There must be proper follow-up procedures in place. There must be a discipleship plan in place (I will talk more about that on the next point). You must decide what ministries you are going to put in place from the beginning and which ones you are going to shelf until God brings the correct people to help launch those ministries. One of the greatest dangers is trying to implement too many ministries to reach too many people in the beginning stages. We are a new/baby church and there is nothing wrong with acting accordingly.

## **II. To make firm or stable**

We are not interested in establishing churches just so we can have another church to add to our roster. Our purpose is to establish or to bring into existence and then our purpose is to make that church firm and stable. This can only be accomplished by adequate teaching and discipleship. I sometimes think we put too much emphasis on Pentecostal preaching when our churches are full of anything but Pentecostals. (I hope that makes sense...I love Pentecostal preaching...but sometimes I don't even understand all of it and I am a Pentecostal. ☺)

Preaching/teaching should be simple, direct and it should demand a response. Every church service should be approached as an opportunity to take another step and to add another layer to the church that you are establishing. We should never just show up and 'wing' it. People are too new; too impressionable; too important to take a chance on just throwing something together. If we are going to make the church firm and stable then it can only be done intentional. There is no such thing as accidental Apostolics...we must be Pentecost on purpose.

And beyond the regular scheduled service ... there MUST be a healthy diet of Home Bible Studies. Anytime someone prays in the altar...they are most likely ready for a Home Bible Study. HBS are slow, methodical and maybe even at times boring ... but they are also proven and effective in building a church. You cannot build a church without a Bible Study chart (that's my humble opinion).

So you have regular services that are there to stabilize converts and then you have Home Bible Studies that help to make firm believers and finally you will need a comprehensive discipleship program. There are so many materials and resources available that there is absolutely no excuse for not having a discipleship program. Discipleship classes are the exclamation point that you desire to see people become stable.

(I would be interested in sharing the discipleship program I have for LexTab if anyone would be interested.)

## **III. To Cause to Grow and Multiply**

Establishing a church does not stop with just a group of people meeting; nor does it stop with solid teaching and discipleship ... an established church isn't really established until it grows and multiply.

Healthy churches grow. Plain and simple. If we have the right pieces in place a church will grow. And many times our problem is not growing a church ... our problem lies in multiplying a church.

I think the first step in multiplying a church (or having multiple churches come out of the main church) is to express that attitude and desire from the very beginning. People need to know that your vision is to reach, reach and reach. We are not trying to build a church of 150 people with a solid income ... we are trying to populate heaven by declaring Acts 2:38 to a lost and dying generation.

We must establish churches by bringing them into existence; by making them stable and firm and by allowing them to grow and multiply.