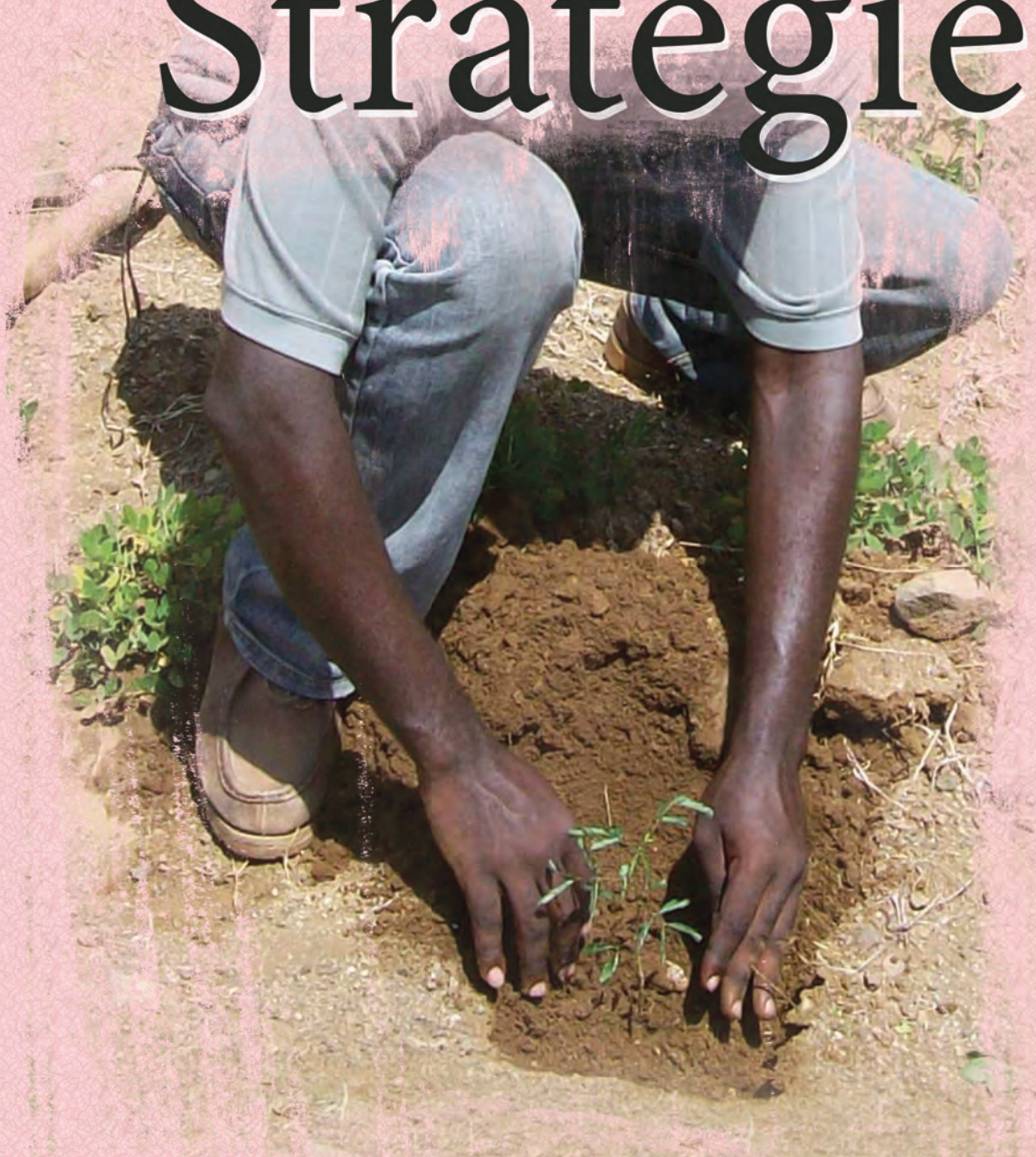


EVANGELISM

# Church Planting Strategies



# **Church Planting Strategies**

Evangelism Course

**Church of the Nazarene**  
Mesoamerica Region

**Bernie Slingerland**  
General Coordinator for the Evangelism Course



## Church Planting Strategies

A book in the School of Leadership series. Evangelism Course

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# Introduction

The School of Leadership book series is designed to provide a tool for the church to train and educate its members so they can actively participate in Christian service according to the gifts and calling (vocation) they have received from their Lord.

Each book provides study materials for a course of the School of Leadership program that is offered by the Nazarene Higher Education Institutions of the Mesoamerica Region of the Church of the Nazarene. Most of the key leaders from our schools (presidents, directors, academic vice presidents and directors of decentralized academic studies) actively participated in the program design.

The School of Leadership has five core courses common to all ministries and six specialized courses for each individual ministry. After completing the series, the respective theological Institution gives the student a certificate (or diploma) in Specialized Ministry.

The general objective of the School of Leadership is “to work with the local church in equipping the saints for the work of the ministry, giving them solid, theological, Biblical knowledge and developing them through the exercise of their gifts for service in their local congregation and in society.” The specific objectives of this program are threefold:

- Develop the ministerial gifts of the local congregation.
- Multiply service ministries in the church and community.
- Raise awareness of the vocation of professional ministry in its diverse forms.

The objective of the book series entitled Evangelism is to train those who are gifted in evangelism and desire to participate in the Great Commission, but who do not yet have professional ministerial education. Missionaries, pastors and lay people throughout the Mesoamerica Region have written the lessons of these six books and the desire of the authors is that each student would receive an enriched vision of the Great Commission and the training to win others for Christ. We desire that God would be glorified through the courses and that each student would grow in their preparation and service as an effective worker in his kingdom.

A special thanks to Dr. Ruben E. Fernandez, Education and Clergy Development Coordinator, Dr. Monica Mastronardi Fernandez for her dedication as General Editor of the project, Rev. Simone Mulieri Twibell for her assistance, and the team of writers and designers who collaborated to publish these books. An additional thanks to the teachers who will share these materials. They will make a difference in the lives of thousands of people throughout the Mesoamerica Region.

Finally, I give thanks to the Mesoamerica Regional Literature team for the publication and distribution of these materials, and to Dr. L. Carlos Saenz, Mesoamerica Regional Director, for his continued support in this task, which is the result of his conviction of the important need for the church to be comprehensively trained.

I pray for God’s blessing for all the disciples whose lives and Christian service will be enriched by these books.

**Dr. Bernie Slingerland**  
Coordinator of Evangelism Mesoamerica Region

# What Is the School of Leadership?

The **School of Leadership** is an educational program for lay ministry in different specialties to engage in the mission of the local church. This program is administered by the Theological Institutions of the Church of the Nazarene in the Mesoamerica Region and taught both at these institutions and in the local churches enrolled in the program.

## Who Can Benefit from the School of Leadership?

It is for all the members of the Church of the Nazarene who have participated in Levels Saving Grace and Sanctifying Grace - Growth in Holiness of the discipleship program A Journey of Grace, and who, with all their heart, wish to discover their gifts and serve God in His work.

## The Plan - A Journey of Grace

In the Church of the Nazarene, we believe that making disciples in the image of Christ in the nations is the foundation of the missionary work of the church and the responsibility of its leadership (Ephesians 4:7-16). For this, at all levels of the church, the implementation of progressive discipleship is promoted as “A Journey of Grace” (John 14: 6), a lifestyle of discipleship. The School of Leadership is part of the “Sanctifying Grace - Ministry Development” section, and is designed for those who have gone through the “Prevenient Grace” and “Saving Grace” sections of the discipleship path.



The work of discipleship is continuous and dynamic; therefore, the disciple never stops growing in the likeness of his Lord. This growth, when healthy, occurs in all dimensions: the individual dimension (spiritual growth), the corporate dimension (joining the congregation), the holiness in life dimension (progressive transformation of our being and doing according to the model of Jesus Christ) and the service dimension (investing our lives in ministry).

**Dr. Monica Mastronardi de Fernandez**  
Managing Editor, The School of Leadership Book Series



# How Do I Use This Book?

This book contains eight lessons of the School of Leadership program, along with activities and final evaluation of the course.

## How are the contents of this book organized?

Each of the eight lessons of this book contains the following:

- ▶ **Objectives:** These are the learning objectives the student is expected to understand at the end of the lesson.
- ▶ **Main Ideas:** A summary of the key teachings of the lesson.
- ▶ **Development of Lesson:** This is the largest section because it is the development of the contents of the lesson. The lessons have been written so that the book can be the teacher, and for that reason the contents have been written in a dynamic form and in simple language with contemporary ideas.
- ▶ **Notes and Comments:** The information in the margins is intended to clarify terms and provide notes that complement or extend the content of the lesson.
- ▶ **Questions:** Sometimes questions are included in the margin that the teacher can use to introduce or reinforce a lesson topic.
- ▶ **What did we learn?:** The box at the end of the lesson development section provides a brief summary of the lesson.
- ▶ **Activities:** This is a page at the end of each lesson that contains learning activities, for individuals or groups, on the subject studied. The estimated time for implementation in class is 20 minutes.
- ▶ **Final evaluation of the course:** This is the last page of the book and once completed the student must remove it from the book and hand it in to a course instructor. The final evaluation should take about 15 minutes.

## How long is each course?

The courses are designed for 12 hours of class over 8 ninety-minute sessions. Each institution and each church or local theological study center will coordinate days and times of the classes. Within this hour and a half the teacher or the teachers should include time for the activities contained in the book.

## What is the role of the student?

The student is responsible for the following:

1. Enroll on time for the course.
2. Buy the book and study each lesson before class time.
3. Arrive for class on time.
4. Participate in class activities.
5. Participate in practical ministry in the local church outside of class.
6. Complete and submit the final evaluation to the teacher.



## What is the role of the teacher of the course?

The professors and teachers for the School of Leadership courses are pastors and laity committed to the mission and ministry of the church and preferably have experience in the ministry they teach. The Director and/or the School of Leadership at the local church (or theological institution) invites their participation and their functions are the following:

1. Be well prepared by studying the book's content and scheduling the use of class time. When studying the lesson, you should have on hand the Bible and a dictionary. Although the lessons are written using simple language, it is recommended that you "translate" what you consider difficult in order to help the students understand. In other words, use terms that they can better understand.
2. Ensure that the students are studying the material in the book and achieving the learning objectives.
3. Plan and accompany students in the activities of ministerial practice. The local pastor and the director of the respective ministry must schedule these activities. These activities should not take away from class time.
4. Take daily attendance and grades in the class report form. The final average will be the result demonstrated by the student in the following activities:
  - a. Class work
  - b. Participation in ministerial practice outside of class
  - c. Final evaluation
5. At the end of the course, collect the evaluation sheets and hand them in with the form "Class Report" to the local School of Leadership director. Do this after totaling the averages and verifying that all data is complete on the form.
6. Professors and teachers should not add tasks or reading assignments apart from the contents of the book. They should be creative in the design of the learning activities and in planning ministry activities outside the classroom according to the reality of their local church and its context.

## How do I teach a class?

We recommend using a 90-minute class session as follows:

- **5 minutes:** Review the topic of the previous lesson and pray together.
- **30 minutes:** Review and discuss the lesson. We recommend using an outline, chalkboard, cardboard or other available materials, using dynamic learning activities and visual media such as graphics, drawings, objects, pictures, questions, assigning students to submit parts of the lesson, and so on. We do not recommend lecturing or having the teacher reread the lesson content.
- **5 minutes:** Break either in the middle of class or when it is convenient.
- **20 minutes:** Work on activities in the book. This can be done at the beginning,

middle or end of the review, or you can complete the activities as you proceed in accordance with the issues as it relates to them.

- **20 minutes:** Discussion about the students' ministry practice that they currently do and that they will do. At the beginning of the course you will need to present the schedule to the students so that they can make arrangements to attend the ministry practice. In the classes when the students discuss their ministry practice, the conversation should be focused on what they learned, including their successes and their errors, as well as the difficulties they encountered.
- **10 minutes:** Prayer for the issues arising from the practice (challenges, people, problems, goals, gratitude for the results, among others).

### **How do I implement the final course evaluation?**

Allocate 15 minutes of time during the last class meeting for the course evaluation. If necessary, students may consult their books and Bibles. Final evaluations are designed to be an activity to reinforce what was learned in class and not a repetition of the contents of the book. The purpose of this assessment is to measure the understanding and evaluation of the student concerning the class topics, their spiritual growth, their progress in the commitment to the mission of the church and their progress in ministerial experience.

# Ministerial Practice Activities

The following are suggested activities for ministerial practice outside of class. The list below includes several ideas to help teachers, pastors, directors of local School of Leadership groups and local ministry directors. From the list you can choose the activity best suited to the contextual situation and the local church ministry, or replace these with others according to the needs and possibilities of your context.

We recommend having at least three ministerial activities per course. You can put the whole class to work on a project or assign group tasks according to interests, gifts and abilities. It is advisable to involve students in a variety of new ministry experiences.

## Suggested Ministry Activities for Church Planting Strategies

1. Do a survey of the congregation to know how many are willing to help plant a new church, and in what ways they could contribute, for example, through prayer, offerings, preaching, discipling, evangelizing, using their musical skills, compassionate ministries, transportation, etc.
2. Organize a workshop for your class and for others from the congregation who are interested, and invite a church planter from your district to learn from his or her experiences. The planter can talk about the steps or processes for planting a church. Evaluate these steps based on the strategy presented in Lesson 4.
3. Begin a prayer group and Bible study in a home and invite neighbors so that you can share the gospel with them. Follow the steps from Chapter 8 about Planting House Churches.
4. Organize an activity to strengthen relationships with family members, friends, neighbors, and others who do not know Christ. This does not need to be an evangelistic activity, but instead a time to make new friends. It could be to visit a new place, an afternoon of board games, or a sport activity. The objective is to establish new friendships with people who are not Christians and then continue those relationships so that in time personal/relational evangelism will be possible.
5. Organize a meeting with the Evangelism Ministry of your local church in order to evaluate the multiplication strategies being used and their results. You can share what you have learned in this course, make some goals, and then a plan for future evangelism. This plan should involve the students in this course.
6. Disciple one person (child, youth or adult) that has accepted Christ in a home or through relational/personal evangelism. Use the discipleship lessons New Life in Christ (youth and adults) or High Voltage (adolescents or youth) to prepare them for baptism. You can download these for free at this website: [www.pastornazareno.net](http://www.pastornazareno.net) or you can find them through the book distributor for the Church of the Nazarene, Mesoamerica Region.
7. Organize a workshop to train the congregation or a group (women, youth, children, adults, etc.) about how to plant a church with the plan *To Be Like Him* (Lessons 3 and 4).
8. Begin a course to train those in your congregation to be cell group leaders. It should include the following topics: how to start a cell group in a home, how to lead a cell group meeting, and how to disciple the new converts to prepare them for baptism and church membership. (To teach about discipleship, we recommend using the book *Reaching our Generation* which is part of this same program as part of the Ministry Leadership Specialty course.



## Lesson 1

# BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES



## Objectives

- To justify church planting through Scripture.
- To identify contextual challenges in church planting.
- To value church planting as a strategy for the multiplication of disciples.

## Main Ideas

- The multiplication of churches will face challenges and opposition, but Christ is the one who has promised to edify the Church. As his disciples, we need only obey the command to go, teach, and make other disciples.
- Each evangelistic strategy and church-planting program should point straight to God, who prepares us to multiply our efforts wherever we go.

**Jorge Ivan Mex Nabte**, author of this section, has been serving as the Coordinator of Evangelism in the East District in Mexico since 2006 and as a pastor at the Rey de Reyes Church in Cancun, Mexico since 2010. Maxima Mission projects, prayer groups, and a new mission have been started under his leadership.

## Introduction

Our church-planting lessons can be found in God's Word, where God has revealed his plan of salvation for the whole world. In the Bible, we learn that the church was created to be a change agent and to transform society. This originates in the mission of God given to the Church.

When we talk about church planting, we need to go back to the Early Church in the New Testament and learn from the "school of evangelism" in the first century and from the first church planters. It is there that we can learn the strategies and principles that were useful then in order to apply them in our context. As we will study in this lesson, these people did not carry out these principles in their own human abilities: it was the Holy Spirit that sent them. It was because of their obedience that the gospel grew stronger, the kingdom message was announced, the number of disciples was increased, and the communities were impacted by God's love.

Is it possible to repeat this part of history in today's society? All of this is possible if we learn and practice the church planting strategies and the multiplication of disciples.

## Church Planting and God's Will

*Here we will see some principles to consider when church planting.*



As we cover this lesson on church planting, our focus needs to be on Jesus, who taught that the Church was born from the heart of God in order to include all nations and peoples on Earth in him.

One time, Jesus asked his disciples a unique question, "But what about you?" he asked. 'Who do you say I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God' " (Matthew 16:15-16). Jesus initiated this conversation for the purpose of teaching his disciples a tremendous lesson and preparing them for what they were going to face in the future. After hearing Peter's response, Jesus affirms something marvelous: "... for this was

not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven” (Matthew 16:17). Peter had declared a great truth: Christ is the base or the foundation upon which the Church is planted. Jesus added that the Church was born out of God’s will and not man’s will. “...and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matthew 16:18).

But what was the point of establishing the Church in this world? The Church should build on top of the foundational ministry of our Lord, continuing the task he started. What is this task? Whenever Jesus started his ministry in a region, he started by announcing the good news of salvation. This good news is still the same message the Church needs to communicate to people today. Jesus said, “*The time has come, he said, ‘The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news’*” (Mark 1:15).

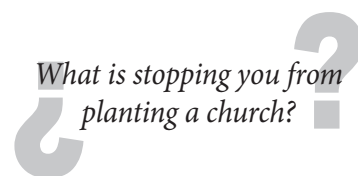
We can see four principles on church planting from these passages:

1. Church planting is a divine project.
2. Christ is the foundation for church planting.
3. Christ is the one who edifies the Church, and is also the Authority.
4. The Church’s message is Christ (the good news of salvation and the coming of his kingdom).

It is really sad to see that many churches today are not planting other churches. This is mostly because they put all of their focus on their finances, activities, administrative aspects, and other things, and so they let God’s will in this area pass them by. They forget that it is not something that is optional; it is not about obeying our human leader, but obeying God’s will. The comfort in our churches and ministries makes us forget that God designed a perfect plan in order to restore and give hope of eternal life to every single person, and he sent us to proclaim these essential truths.

In 2004, as a lay member in the Church of the Nazarene in Cancun, I was profoundly challenged by a workshop called *To Be Like Him* taught by Dr. Bernie Slingerland. Ever since, I have fought a constant battle to respond to God’s calling to plant a church in the needy community of Tres Reyes (Three Kings).

In 2006, with the support of my church and family, we started this project by applying the principles from the *To Be Like Him* plan. We formed a powerful army of prayer warriors by practicing the spiritual disciplines. We prayed for the future church’s pastor, for leaders for the church, and for a building. In 2007, pastor Javier Silva and his wife joined us. They were members of the Church of the Nazarene in a church in the city of Chicago, but they had a call from God to work in Cancun in a new church. Since then, we have been witnesses together of God’s extraordinary power. Today the Rey de Reyes (King of Kings) Church of the Nazarene exists in the community, and its mission is to proclaim the kingdom message in the community. God has done what we could never do in our own strength!



# Challenges in Church Planting

*What can we do to make God's purpose a reality?*



Today, the mega-church secret is tempting and attractive to us, and we often ask ourselves, "What strategies are they using? How do they apply them? How can we also do it?"

If we closely observe these churches, we will come to notice a wide variety of strategies and methods used. We will also notice that they apply the same biblical principles of growth that Jesus taught to the first church planters. We can be fruitful, as well, if we apply these same principles.

Jesus revealed these principles for church planters in Mark 9:35-38. Each of these represents a challenge for those who want to participate in evangelism and church planting anywhere. Let's see what they are:

## A) Mobilization

Mobilization is a very important factor. We need to move to where the people and families to whom we want to minister are located. Jesus carried out his ministry in an intentional way by spreading out to "towns and villages" (Matthew 9:35). As he traveled, accompanied by his disciples (the future church planters), Jesus prepared them in an exemplary way. How?

- ✓ Teaching
- ✓ Announcing the good news of the kingdom of God
- ✓ Healing sickness and disease

Many times, we see church planting as something very difficult. However, the truth is that we are the ones who have made it more complicated than it needs to be. In the Gospels, Jesus challenges us to move out to the communities, raise our voices and announce the good news of the kingdom of God.

## B) Visualization

Matthew 9:36 says that when Jesus "saw the crowd, he had compassion on them." We cannot turn a blind eye to so many people in need of love and hope. Jesus' vision is thorough; he taught clearly, announcing the gospel and healing simultaneously. However, at the same time, Jesus knew this task was overwhelming. His heart was torn when he saw these people who "... were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36).

In Jesus' words, there are two points that need special attention when it comes to church planting:

1. "The harvest is plentiful" (Matthew 9:37). Jesus himself realized that no one can minister alone, because the task is too much. People all

*"Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness" (Matthew 9:35).*

*Jesus trained the first church planters along the way as they shared in ministerial tasks.*

around us are hungering for God, needing someone to care for them, and needing to feel truly loved, accepted, and valued. The kingdom message seeks the lost in order to give them a new life full of satisfaction and happiness. There are thousands of people who are waiting for someone to care about them and share with them Christ's love and the salvation message.

2. "But the workers are few" (Matthew 9:37). Centuries have gone by since Jesus said these words, and still the workers are few. We still need willing leaders to see these communities with Jesus' compassionate eyes! This challenges us to evaluate ourselves and reflect upon the type of workers we are.

### C) Communication

"Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matthew 9:38). We need to communicate with the owner of the harvest. This requires spending time in intentional prayer, specifically praying for workers and for church planters who will apply Jesus' model. We must go to the towns and neighborhoods, seeing the people's needs clearly and thoroughly, and communicating with the Lord of the harvest about these needs. The success of church planting does not depend on the workers, but on the Lord. He is the one who has sent us to harvest his field, and he continues being the owner of the harvest.

*"When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'"*  
(Matthew 9:36-37).

*"When you see what Jesus saw, you will do what Jesus did"*  
(Carroll Thompson).

## Church Planting and Multiplication of Disciples

*Disciples need to obey Jesus' command to multiply.*



Now we are going to take a tour of the places that mark the birth of the church, especially in Jerusalem, just after Jesus' departure. The disciples had been commissioned by the Master to put his plan of salvation into action throughout the world. The plan's structure or method is not complicated, but instead practical and simple. Jesus presents a plan that is easy to comprehend and put into practice. It can be summed up by this phrase: "Obedient disciples making obedient disciples."

A visual for Jesus' plan for multiplication looks something like this:



In other words, obedient disciples go, teach, and make obedient disciples. During his ministry, Jesus practiced the same multiplication plan by sending his disciples to do what they had seen him do. He did this several times:

*What is the future of a church that does not multiply its number of disciples?*



- Jesus sent the 70 to put the kingdom gospel into practice (Luke 10).
- He sent the 11 to go and preach the gospel in all nations (Matthew 28).
- The 120 awaited Jesus' promise in Jerusalem in order to continue with the evangelism task (Acts 1).

## Facing Opposition

**Church planters will face opposition.**



In Acts 8:1, we see two important things: the impactful growth of the church in Jerusalem and the multiplication strategy that the first disciples used. The most surprising thing is that this growth happened in a time of adversity. Acts 8:1 says that there was a great persecution against the church. Acts 8:3 mentions the leader of those persecutors, Saul, who ravaged the early church. The word **ravage**, according to the FreeDictionary.com means, "To bring heavy destruction; devastate."

The persecution Saul spearheaded was violent, a true war against Christ's disciples. Today, we as Christians are not free of persecution, and we need to face this situation with courage and continue making disciples in spite of the opposition in our context.

*"Do not ask for persecution to cease! We should not be praying for a lighter burden, rather for stronger backs to withstand it. Then the world will see that God is with us, strengthening us to live in such a way that we reflect his love and power"*  
(Liu Zhenying or brother Yun, leader of the persecuted church in China).

How did the apostles respond to this threat? Acts 8:1 says, "...all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria." Notice the war strategy: the apostles were not running, they were staying in Jerusalem in order to face the opposition and keep Jesus Christ's message alive. They stayed firm in obedience to the Great Commission, taking care of the new disciples in Jerusalem. The rest of the disciples dispersed into neighboring regions. Also notice that Luke does not say they fled, but that they "scattered." They did this with a clear purpose, "Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went" (Acts 8:4).

One of the regions to which the disciples scattered was to Samaria. In the book of Acts, it says Samaria was the city that was most impacted by Christ's message. Undoubtedly, no human power can stop the Lord's army, moved by the Holy Spirit. In the same way, we need to arm ourselves today with Christ's power in order to become church planters.

These are the words of Lorenzo, a member in our church. We ministered to him until his last day on this earth. "In my experience in ministry, the obstacles I have faced make me see and remember that God goes ahead of me." Lorenzo had to face domestic violence and abandonment from his family. On many occasions he was beaten, and he received death threats several times. As a church, we persevered and fought alongside him, shoulder to shoulder. One day, he told me, "I had a special visit from God through one of his angels, and they have told me that they are waiting for the Lord's command to take me home." They came for him that day, and now our beloved brother is rejoicing in the Lord's presence.



# Activities

Time



20'

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Make a list of principles you have learned in this lesson about church planting. How would you apply them in your context?

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2. What changes should you make in your ministry to make church planting more intentional?

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3. The following New Testament passages talk about the persecution and dangers the disciples faced. After reading them, answer this question in groups of 3 or 4 persons: What can we learn from these passages that will help us when we face difficulties as church planters?

• Matthew 10:22

• 2 Corinthians 11:23-25

• James 1:2

• Mark 8:34

• Colossians 1:24

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4. Take time to pray as a class and consecrate your lives to the Lord in order to discern his will concerning planting a church together as a group. Each one should start praying for ten people who have yet to know Christ. Write at least ten names of people you will pray for in the next 90 days.

1.	6.
2.	7.
3.	8.
4.	9.
5.	10.

What day/hour of the week will you start and when will you finish the 90-day prayer plan?

Start date: \_\_\_\_\_ End date: \_\_\_\_\_

A black and white photograph showing a close-up of a person's hands planting a small seedling into the soil. The person is wearing sandals. The background is a field of dry, sparse vegetation.

## *Lesson 2*

A black and white photograph of a large crowd of people walking through a field. The people are dressed in winter clothing, including coats and hats. The background is a field of tall, dry grass or reeds, creating a textured, almost abstract pattern.

# **CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS**

## Objectives

- To understand the basic elements of planting churches.
- To identify the reasons that churches are not being planted.
- To know how to choose the best CPM (Church Planting Movement) strategy for the context.

## Main Ideas

- In order to reach the lost in communities where there are no churches, one of the most effective strategies is establishing new churches.
- The church planting movement is based on three fundamental elements: vision, connection, and passion.

## Introduction

**Bernie Slingerland**, author of lessons 2 and 3, has been serving as the Coordinator of Evangelism for the Church of the Nazarene in the Mesoamerica Region since 2002. Under his leadership, 153 missional zones have been established, 723 new churches have been organized, 6,157 missions have been started, and 12 new districts have been formed.

Many evangelical church organizations around the world agree with a central truth: the best way to reach people for Christ is by planting new churches. In other words, a church can be used to reach people, disciple new believers, be a place of worship, and, under the Holy Spirit's guidance, be the catalyst for development of new outreach strategies.

There are probably a thousand and one ways to plant a church, all of them good, but if and only if that strategy is based on biblical principles. In addition, the strategies that are best received include laymen (or volunteers) as well as pastors. For example, the success of the Methodist Movement in the 16th century was due to the fact that John Wesley trained and sent out volunteers to serve in the ministry. As people were trained, they were sent to make disciples and plant churches. When this model is multiplied, it creates a church planting movement.

Since there are so many strategies for church planting, we cannot assume we can instantly plant a church just because we attend a church-planting workshop. Planting a church is the work God does through his people. Therefore, we need to seek his direction from the beginning to the end. Church planting puts us in the middle of a spiritual battle; in other words, it is a direct confrontation with the evil one, who has had these people chained for a long time. We need to let God fight the battle, but at the same time, we need to always be praying and obeying his command to "go and make disciples." When we work with the Holy Spirit, the Lord of the harvest will bring in the harvest and do his work through us.

*What motivates a volunteer to get involved with planting a church?*

## Why Are Churches Not Being Planted?

*The following highlights attitudes that keep us from planting churches.*



One of the main reasons Christians are not involved in church planting is due in part to the fact that they have an incorrect definition of the church. If, in order to start a church, we have to have 50 to 250 people, a building, and a seminary graduate as a pastor, then there is little room for laymen to be involved in the founding of churches.

People need to understand that it is possible for them to participate. The Bible does not say that only pastors can plant churches. Here is another way to put it: if we ask people if they want to be involved in planting a church, they are going to say no if they have the idea that this is too lofty of a goal. On the other hand, if we ask the same people if they could start a Bible study in their homes, many would say they could. What is the difference? The definition of what is the church. Jesus said, *“For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them”* (Matthew 18:20). Almost all churches start with a small group of people.

Some people, both inside and outside the church, have the wrong idea about church planting. This is due to the fact that they think that it is not necessary to have a plan or vision to accomplish something. In today’s world, many people live in the moment and are not in the habit of planning in order to reach a certain life goal. Many people within the church with good intentions but have this same attitude. They have regular services at their churches, but they never do anything to spread God’s kingdom outside of the church’s four walls. This is synonymous with apathy. There are people who even use the Bible to back up their lack of outreach activity! As a result, these churches go in circles, just as Proverbs 29:18a says, *“When there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint.”*

We also find many Christians with an isolation attitude. This reflects what is happening in some of our communities, where people do not want to know anything about their neighbors and want to stay isolated so that no one will meddle in their private lives. The lives of the church members can come to reflect the customs of people in their context. For example, the people will get together to worship week after week, but they live isolated from each other; they do not interact or communicate during the week. At the end of the day, there is no difference between the friendships between those in the faith and the friendships of people in the world outside of the church. These attitudes of complacency and apathy within the church are opposite of the attitudes of involvement and commitment Jesus taught us as he spread the gospel.

**Mission-type church:** refers to a preaching point, cell group in someone’s home, or a meeting place where a group of new believers is being ministered to in order to plant a new church.

## Basic Elements

***Next, we will examine the essential elements of church planting.***



In the gospels we can see that Jesus always preached the good news wherever he went. *“After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God”* (Luke 8:1). This is the best example. The Messiah not only told his disciples what to do, but he also showed them how to carry out this mission.

Jesus left us with his example, and he made sure we knew that was the reason he came to this world. We can see that Christ always kept his eyes on the goal, served in harmony with the Father and Spirit, and constantly

**The Nazarene Biblical Institute** located in Coban, Guatemala was founded in 1921. In 2012, 564 students were studying in the Christian Ministry diploma program.

met with the twelve. Vision, connection, and passion were the three most important elements of his ministry.



**Cahabon** is an area in the Alta Verapaz province, north of Guatemala City. It is approximately 900 km<sup>2</sup> and has 31,425 inhabitants (Wikipedia Nov. 11, 2014).

### Motivation for Planting Churches

Allen Wilson was a missionary in Guatemala in the '70s. He was one of the first to send students out from the Bible Institute in Coban in order to plant churches. The students went to a community called Cahabon, and that is where they started sharing the gospel with people. They went there three times, and the people in the town kicked them out each time.

Allen Wilson remembers there was a basketball court in the town's park. He challenged the teens from the town to a game of basketball against the Bible Institute students. When Allen Wilson and the students from the institute were walking towards the town, several men on horseback intercepted them and said, "You are our guests, so ride with us to the town." When they got to the park, they played ball. The team from the Institute lost, but the people from the town asked them to come back that night and share what they had to say. That night, the students and Allen Wilson preached the gospel and several people from the community accepted Jesus.

The next day, Allen taught several teens how to play volleyball, a game they had never seen before and really liked. The town mayor said, "This game is really fun, feel free to share what you want with us tonight." That night, they shared the gospel again and many people accepted Christ. The next day, the mayor said, "You cannot leave until you promise to plant a church in our community." The church in Cahajabon is still alive and well today, thanks to these followers of Christ who showed God's love to this community through sports. Sports helped open the doors in order to share the gospel with them.

Allen had a vision and a passion for reaching the teens in this town. He reached them thanks to the new strategy he used and the friendship he made with the locals.

# Projects in Action

**Now we will learn about CPM (Church Planting Movement) strategies.**



Just as there is not an exclusive way that works to evangelize all people, there is not a single method for establishing new churches. It all depends on context, location, preparation, and available resources. Next, a variety of these strategies or projects that the Church of the Nazarene uses for planting churches will be presented:

**1. Missional Zone Planter:** This strategy starts with finding a pioneer area inside of a district, where there are few or no churches at all, and is an area that can be impacted in a three to seven year time period. The goal is to plan 10 to 20 churches using the “To Be Like Him” plan (which will be explained in detail in Lesson 3 of this book) or any other available plan. In this strategy, it is required for the church planters to be dedicated almost full time to planting and helping new churches grow. They need to be in charge of discipling and forming new disciples, leadership training, and the organization of said churches. The zone can reach a point where it can be organized into a new district. This project is implemented in the Mesoamerica Region, where there are 159 Missional Zones (2014). In the case of church planter Alvaro Arroyo from the North District in Costa Rica, he and other leaders have planted several churches in the Guanacaste province for the last three years; this could someday become a new district.

**2. Planting from already-established churches:** This strategy consists of an already-established church planting one or more churches at a specified time. That way, each mother church parents a mission-type church or preaching point. The advantage of this strategy is that it uses an already existing congregation to help with the process. In Brazil, for example, the Church of the Nazarene is using this strategy, and churches are planting missions in neighborhoods and communities nearby. They support these churches until they are developed into strong churches.

**3. Church planting for “person of peace”:** This project starts with a planter who goes into a community, and starts the church work with the first person who is willing to listen to the message. This strategy’s base is the method the apostle Paul used to start churches. As part of this strategy, the people involved walk throughout the community and pray for the lost. The evangelists need to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s direction, because it will guide those hearts he has been preparing to receive the seed of the gospel. The District Superintendent, Manuel Molina, used this method to plant churches in Southern Mexico. As a result, this was how the Sierra Madre District in Chiapas, Mexico, was born.

*A missional zone or pioneer field is a geographical region designated for specific work in order to establish new churches. Some of these regions later become new districts in the Church of the Nazarene (See section 200.2 in the Church of the Nazarene Manual, 2017-2021).*

In order to open a missional zone, it is important to first find a leader who shares the vision and is dedicated to the mission. This person can be a layman, pastor or District Superintendent (DS). Then it is time to make a plan for three to five years. The project needs to be approved by the DS and the District Advisory Council, as well as the FSC (Field Strategy Coordinator) and the Regional Coordinator of Evangelism. A new “missional zone” is opened where new churches are being planted (Slingerland, 2012:49).

Dr. Louie Bustle and Dr. Stan Toler are authors of the book *Each One Disciple One: A Complete Strategy for Effective Discipleship*. Published by Nazarene Publishing House (2009).



*Ethiopia is located in what is called the Horn of Africa, and has a population of more than 93 million people (July 2012). Today, there are more than 1,200,000 Nazarenes in Ethiopia.*

**4. Each one, win one:** This strategy requires consecrated laymen. After having gone through a time of discipline prayer for the lost, they invite and start an evangelistic campaign. When the people who are invited accept Jesus, this consecrated layman or big brother is responsible for discipling them with the basic discipleship lessons. A new cell-group is started with the new group of believers, which can later become a new church. For each evangelistic event, several cell-groups can be formed. Dr. Louie Bustle and Dr. Bruno Radi watched this strategy flourish in the South American Region. It has also been successful in other world areas.

**5. Project Mahaber:** A group of churches in Ethiopia, inspired by the book *Church Planting Movement* by Dr. David Garrison, implemented this project. The South Central district in Ethiopia grew from 42 churches in 2004, to 142 in 2005, to 500 churches in 2006, and 1000 in 2007. This district developed a plan for church planting called *Mahaber* (which means “companionship”). This strategy is carried out in the following way:

Step 1: Visit a family in their home.

Step 2: Ask for permission to share the gospel over a cup of coffee.

Step 3: Ask if they have any friends or family who would like to hear the Word of God on your next visit.

Step 4: Get together every week at this home with this group in order to have a Bible study, constantly sharing the doctrine of Church of the Nazarene with the people.

Step 5: Train each person in personal evangelism (Evangelism Explosion strategy) no later than the last week in the second month.

Step 6: Identify and equip leaders from this church-home in the first two months.

Step 7: Show the Jesus Film, having an intentional strategy for assimilating the new believers in a Bible study (this is usually done in the third month after the Evangelism Explosion training).

Step 8: Guide this group in planting another group in the area (around the third or fourth month).

Step 9: Declare this group a church (Preaching Point). Do this after completely teaching them the Church of the Nazarene doctrine, and after the group has planted another group.

Step 10: Every month, hold an evangelistic campaign and time of fellowship of 3 to 4 days with all of the churches and groups in the area. The goal is to implant the Holiness Church Planting Movement.



# Activities

Time

20'

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In your own words, write a definition of “new church.”

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2. Examine this inclusive definition of “church” written by the General Superintendents of the Church of the Nazarene in the following document: *A New Definition of a Local Church for the Church of the Nazarene Statistics (2013)*. Next, check off the groups that fall under this definition in the list below, all of which we need to include from now on in our statistical reports as churches.

*“Whatever group that meets regularly for spiritual nourishment, worship, or instruction at a set time and place with a leader who is aligned with the message and the Church of the Nazarene’s mission can be recognized as a church, and reported as such to the district and the church’s general statistics.”*

- A. Organized church led by an ordained pastor with a church building and a history of 20 years.
- B. Weekly Bible study led by a layperson.
- C. Group of work partners who get together daily at their lunch break to study the Word.
- D. Local soup kitchen sponsored by a church or group of churches.
- E. Bible Classes for teens, adults, and married couples every Thursday evening.
- F. Children’s Church on Saturday afternoons at a community building, outside, in a garage, park or other available area.
- G. Preaching point held weekly at an elderly person’s home, led by a group of believers.
- H. Preaching point held weekly at a prison led by a couple from the church.

3. What strategy would you choose to plant a new church in your context? Why do you think that one is the best choice?

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4. Make a list of steps you would take to plant a new church.

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5. Out of the three necessary elements for planting a church, which do you think you have? Which do you think you are lacking? How can you gain the one(s) you are lacking?

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A black and white photograph showing a person's hands planting a seed in the soil. The person is wearing jeans and sandals. The soil is dark and appears to be in a garden or field. The background is slightly blurred, showing some dry grass and a rock.

**Lesson 3**

# ***THE TO BE LIKE HIM PLAN***



## Objectives

- To identify the seven biblical principles for a strong church.
- To recognize the ministries that are involved in planting a church.
- To learn about different models used for planning a service.

## Main Ideas

- In order for a church to grow healthy and strong, it is necessary to know and apply the seven principles in the *To Be Like Him* plan.
- Just as Jesus led a consecrated life of prayer, evangelism, teaching, and devotion, we should do the same with our lives.

## Introduction

**Bernie Slingerland**, author of lessons 2 and 3, has been serving as the Coordinator of Evangelism for the Church of the Nazarene in the Mesoamerica Region since 2002. Under his leadership, 153 missional zones have been established, 723 new churches have been organized, 6,157 missions have been started, and 12 new districts have been formed.

*In your opinion, why do some attempts at church planting fail?*

**Consecration:** *This refers to the complete surrender of our lives to God, including everything that we are (our abilities, knowledge, life experience, etc.), all that we possess (time, strength, material possession, etc.), and all of our future (what we will become or will possess).*

There never has and never will be anyone who impacted the world more than Jesus Christ. He was not a normal person; he was and is God. During his time on Earth, Jesus changed the history of mankind because he fulfilled the mission his Father gave him. The Great Commission can be summarized in the following way: Do God's will in this world.

Jesus Christ is the best role model for mankind as God's servant and representative. We should follow his example all the time, but we need to realize that we cannot fulfill this divine responsibility in our own strength. The Great Commission is preceded by the declaration that Christ has been given all authority. It is only when we are under this authority and are filled with God's power that we can be a part of this commission.

In this lesson, we will see seven principles Jesus Christ practiced continually in his ministry. We should practice these principles in our own lives and in this way reach all the nations (Matthew 28:18-20) by planting churches and expanding his kingdom on this Earth. These seven biblical principles from the strategy *To Be Like Him* should become our personal spiritual disciplines. These disciplines are consecration, prayer, compassion, promotion, evangelism, education and participation. Church planting should be done through these principles and spiritual disciplines so that the work will bear fruit and be blessed by God.

## Seven Biblical Principles

*In this section we will see what the *To Be Like Him* plan is all about.*



The *To Be Like Him* plan promotes seven disciplines that should be present in our lives and ministries. Practicing each of them allows us to plant healthy and growing churches.

### 1. Consecration

We should all completely surrender our will to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to do this, we need to be consecrated. In this step, we ask the Lord to clean and fill us with Holy Spirit, so we can be holy as he is holy. If we want

*To Be Like Him*, we need to make the decision to accept Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of our lives and of all humanity (John 3:16). The act of consecration includes the following:

- Confess our need to be cleaned from sin and the flesh.
- Surrender our will to his.
- Accept Jesus as Lord and Savior.
- Believe that the Holy Spirit can fill us with his power and presence.
- Practice a personal relationship with Jesus.

## 2. Prayer

Prayer is a starting point for unbelievers to be born again. Prayer is the way we communicate with the Father, and also how we discern his will (this is more than just listing needs). Prayer is the way we can make promises with God and ensure a living and constant relationship with him.

If we want *To Be Like Him*, we need to pray like Christ. He knew that when he prayed, God's power was unleashed in his life and in the lives of the people around him. The Lord is looking for people to consecrate their time by praying for unbelievers, since they need a spiritual touch for their hearts to be open to the presentation of the gospel.

In these passages, we can see how prayer was a top priority in Jesus' life:

- He prayed night and day (Mark 1:35; 6:46)
- Sometimes, he prayed alone, away from his disciples (Luke 6:12)
- Sometimes, he prayed with his disciples (Luke 11:1-4)
- He prayed directly to the Father (Luke 10: 21)
- The time or moment to pray did not matter to Jesus (Mark 6:46)
- He taught people to pray for specific situations (Matthew 7:7-11)
- He prayed to know and do the Father's will (Matthew 26:39, 42)

## 3. Compassion

The best way to show our love for God is by telling unbelievers about God's love through acts of compassion. Through Jesus Christ's acts of compassion, people could feel God's love touching their lives. How did Jesus show God's compassionate love? By healing the sick, feeding the hungry, consoling the widows, and in many other ways.

Not only are big compassionate acts important, but so are our small actions because they can also show God's love to people. Jesus Christ said that even through giving a cup of water in Jesus' name, we will be blessed. Sometimes we think that compassionate ministry is only carried out through big projects like offering help after a natural disaster, providing medical

**Carnality:** living in the flesh is the opposite of living a life of holiness. Living in the flesh refers to making our fleshly desires a priority and living in a selfish way in order to please ourselves instead of consecrating our entire lives to serve God and our neighbor.

What little things can you do this week to show compassion to others in Jesus' name?

services with a team of doctors, or assisting in some other crisis. But in reality, we can be compassionate in small acts, for example, by giving a cup of water in Jesus' name to someone who is thirsty.

**4. Promotion**

Jesus talked with his disciples about the need to share the good news with everyone. In the same way, we should invite unbelievers to hear Christ's gospel. When Jesus did something in someone's life, they immediately started to announce everything they had seen and people believed them just by hearing about it. Just as Jesus fearlessly spread the good news of the gospel, no disciple should be embarrassed to speak about the Lord's gospel. If we want *To Be Like Him* we need to take advantage of every available publicity venue to invite people to hear the gospel. This includes the various venues we have available to us (word of mouth, cards, pamphlets, posters, megaphones, radio, TV, social network, etc.).

**5. Evangelism**

Jesus Christ evangelized person to person, to groups, and to multitudes. He used different methods for evangelizing depending on the situation. According to Jesus' example, when we present the gospel to unbelievers, our main goal should always be for them to make a decision for Christ. To study Jesus' evangelism example, we can use the following question guide.

JESUS' EVANGELISM EXAMPLE		
<b>Who did Jesus evangelize?</b>	He evangelized all kinds of people	Matthew 22:10
	He evangelized people of different nationalities	John 4:1-8
	He evangelized people one on one, in small groups, and in multitudes	John 3:1-21 Matthew 8:1
<b>Where did Jesus evangelize?</b>	On the road	Luke 9:57-62
	In homes	Luke 19:1-9
	At the temple	Mark 11:27
<b>What message did he preach?</b>	Receive Jesus as Lord and Savior	Mark 5:19 Luke 19:10
	Receive forgiveness for sin	Mark 2:5 John 20:23
	Receive Jesus as the only way to heaven	John 14:6

**6. Education**

Jesus disciplined his followers personally and taught them everyday. New believers need attention immediately after their conversion in order for them to grow healthy and strong in Christ. In the *To Be Like Him* plan, it is the consecrated ones who need to be discipling the new believers.

To disciple, we need to follow Jesus' example. Therefore, we are going to study who, how, and where Jesus taught by looking at this guide.

JESUS' DISCIPLESHIP EXAMPLE		
<b>Who did Jesus teach?</b>	Jesus taught one on one and in groups	Matthew 5:1 John 3:1-21
	The rich and poor; women, men and children	Luke 6:17- 21 Mark 10:13- 31
	His followers with whom he lived	Luke 6:12-16
	The just and the sinners	Matthew 9:9-13
<b>Where did Jesus teach?</b>	In towns, homes, mountain tops, and gardens	Luke 6:1
	In public areas, temples, and markets	John 7:14
	In small towns and large cities	Luke 17:11
<b>How did Jesus teach?</b>	He saw everyone as having the potential to be a disciple	Luke 7:36-39
	He taught with authority	Mark 1:27 Luke 4:32
	His perspectives were always in line with the Scriptures	Luke 4:14-21 John 19:28
	He used parables and his own personal example	Matthew 13:31

### 7. Participation

After a training period, Jesus involved his disciples in ministry. New believers need to be baptized, then they need to become members in a church, and afterwards it is important that they get involved in the mission of the church. Our main goal is that all the believers be consecrated and well-prepared through discipleship to take part in a ministry and grow *To Be Like Him*. We can study Jesus' plan to involve new believers in ministry in the following question guide.

*God is inviting you to participate in his work around the world.... What is he asking you to do?*

JESUS' PLAN TO INVOLVE OTHERS IN MINISTRY		
<b>How did Jesus train his disciples?</b>	He delegated work for the disciples	Matthew 10:1-5
	He trained all of his disciples	Matthew 10:5-42
	He sent his disciples to minister in pairs	Luke 10:1
	He asked them for a report of their results	Luke 10:17-23
	He visited the towns where his disciples worked	Luke 10:1



<b>What ministries did Jesus delegate to his disciples?</b>	Teaching and preaching ministries	Matthew 28:19-20
	Evangelism ministry	Luke 9:6
	Healing ministry	Luke 9:1-2

## How to Plant Strong Churches

*Here we will see seven elements for planting strong churches.*



There are certain elements that need to be considered for a new church to begin well and to grow firmly and strongly. It is important that these seven elements that form the *To Be Like Him* plan be followed carefully. That way, we will come to have strong churches instead of weak and unhealthy churches.

- 1. Preparation:** Use the *To Be Like Him* program for personal preparation and for group training for those who will be planting the new church.
- 2. Local Resources:** Use the evangelism method that is easiest to understand for the people with whom you will be starting the cell group, mission, and/or church.
- 3. Discipleship:** Start a discipleship program with each new believer within 48 hours of his or her conversion.
- 4. Funds:** Teach the new church to be responsible for covering the costs by being good stewards of all personal resources and church resources. It is not healthy to promote economic dependence by providing funds to cover all the new church's needs.
- 5. Construction:** The new church's members should participate in the construction of the new church building; this will help them to better identify with their church.
- 6. Commission:** Train the members and delegate ministerial tasks with the goal of the members evangelizing and planting churches by themselves.
- 7. Cultural Sensibility:** Be careful to adapt to the cultural expressions and customs of the people in the place where you will be planting the new church.

*“Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ”  
(Dietrich Bonhoeffer).*

# Examples for Preparing for a Service

*Here we will see three worship styles and examples of how to prepare a service.*



When it is time to prepare the program for the service, we should always prefer preparation over improvisation. There are many ways to organize the components of a worship service. These allow for variety instead of repeating the same thing over and over again. Here we present three different styles from which to choose.

**1. Contemporary:** This worship style is more relevant to the modern age. Just because it is simple does not mean it should be done without planning. The following are two examples on how to prepare the order of the service:

### Example A

*Prelude  
Welcome  
Three songs  
Prayer  
Offering  
Announcements  
Two songs  
Bible Reading  
Special song  
Message  
Song for the invitation  
Invitation*

### Example B

*Announcements  
Prayer  
Four songs  
Bible Reading  
Three songs  
Message  
Invitation with song  
Offering with song  
Song for dismissal*

*What model of a Christian church service would be best for your culture?*

**2. Liturgical:** In this worship style, the Bible has a central place, and the Bible study is more profound. Sometimes it can be very ritualistic and solemn. Here are some examples:

### Example A

*Invocation/Prayer  
Hymn  
Bible Reading  
Hymn  
Pastoral prayer  
Hymn  
Offering  
Bible Reading  
Message  
Communion  
Benediction*

### Example B

*Invocation/Prayer  
Welcome  
Hymn  
Pastoral Prayer  
Hymn  
Bible Reading (Psalm)  
Bible Reading (Gospel)  
Message  
Communion  
Offering  
Benediction*

**3. Traditional:** This type of service is a fusion of the contemporary and liturgical services. Here are two examples:

**Example A**

*Prayer*  
*Three hymns*  
*Pastoral Prayer*  
*Hymn*  
*Offering*  
*Hymn*  
*Bible Reading*  
*Message*  
*Invitation*  
*Prayer*

**Example B**

*Musical Prelude*  
*Welcome*  
*Bible Reading (Psalm)*  
*Two hymns*  
*Offering/music*  
*Special song*  
*Bible Reading*  
*Message*  
*Invitation*  
*Benediction*

## **To Be Like Him Ministry Plan**

***Now we will see how to integrate these biblical principles into practical ministries.***



The *To Be Like Him* plan paves the way for the development of many ministries and Christian service vocations. Depending on the gifts of the Spirit and the personal calling of each believer, all can be actively involved in church planting in any of the following ministerial areas and responsibilities:

### **Consecration Ministry**

- Preach and teach biblical principles each week.
- Encourage the members to continue planting and caring for churches.
- Baptize and lead people to grow spiritually.
- Organize services to encourage the church to grow spirituality through preaching and teaching holiness.

### **Prayer Ministry**

- Pray for the unbelievers and the church projects.
- Pray by name for the unbelievers living in the areas where new churches will be planted.
- Pray both daily and in weekly prayer meetings for non-Christians.
- Pray for 30 to 90 days before each evangelistic activity.

### **Compassion Ministry**

- Plan and implement compassion projects in the community.
- Hold a weekly or monthly project for each new church planted.
- Motivate others to participate in these projects.
- Gather the funds in creative ways in order to support these efforts.

### Promotion Ministry

- Announce the projects weekly.
- Find creative ways to promote events both inside and outside the church walls, specifically in the neighborhoods where new churches will be planted.
- Distribute the promotion materials so others will get involved.
- Gather the resources needed to maintain all the ministries.

### Evangelism Ministry

- Organize one or two evangelistic programs a month.
- Receive training on the implementation of these evangelism programs.
- Look for the best evangelism strategy for the context where the church will be planted.

### Education Ministry

- Prepare a discipleship plan before evangelizing.
- Begin to disciple new believers within 48 hours after their conversion.
- Disciple new believers regularly, in their homes if possible.
- Motivate them to be baptized and receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

### Participation Ministry

- Make sure the ministries listed above are taken seriously.
- Plan a strategy with the *To Be Like Him* plan for planting one or more new churches.
- Take responsibility for the statistics and report the results monthly with the form that the Church of the Nazarene Evangelism Regional Office provides.
- Send pictures and testimonies of the church's monthly progress to the same Regional Evangelism Office.

*“Every Christian is signed up for God’s school. He does not save us to leave us alone. He does not forgive our sins to later leave us, saying, ‘I’ll see you in Heaven.’ Rather, he starts working in us to take us to the next level in maturity and growth in order to peel us away from the world and ourselves, so that we will depend completely on Him and on his grace”  
(Roger Ellsworth, paraphrased).*

*Your days at the most cannot be very long, so use them to the best of your ability for the glory of God and the benefit of your generation  
(William Booth).*

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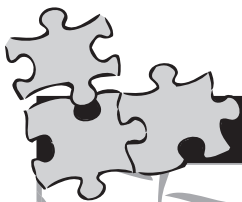
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## WHAT DID WE LEARN?

Planting a healthy church requires consecrated workers who embrace the responsibilities for the seven ministries included in the *To Be Like Him* plan.

# Activities

Time

20'

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Through the following test, evaluate how your ministry is doing according to the To Be Like Him plan. Use the evaluation scale for your answers. At the end, answer these questions: Which ministries from the plan could you best utilize? In which areas do you think you would best serve?

0=None      1=Little      2=Sometimes      3=A lot      4=Always

- I can guide a group of people to have a more intimate relationship with God.
- It is a habit for me to pray every morning.
- I think about how to lessen the affliction of those who suffer.
- I want to go door to door in my neighborhood and announce the evangelistic activity.
- I try to share the gospel at least once a week.
- I have discipled several new believers.
- I would like to help others in their search for a ministry.
- I can explain how someone can be cleansed and filled with the Holy Spirit.
- I can hug someone who has AIDS.
- I have promoted special events in my local church.
- I believe laymen should be leaders of discipleship classes.
- The sick ask me to visit and pray for them.
- I can talk to complete strangers.
- When I testify of how Christ saved me, some of those listening recognize their need for Christ and turn to God.
- When I teach, students learn.
- I intercede frequently for souls who do not know Christ.

2. Write a possible compassion project that can help the people on your prayer list (look at the 90-day plan in the activities of Lesson 1). At the end, share it with the rest of the class, and have everyone evaluate the ideas to choose the best ones.

What Project?	When?	Where?	How?	More information

3. In groups of 3 or 4, think of some ideas for promoting the church's evangelism events by answering these questions:

How will you promote?    How many times a month?    When and where?

A black and white photograph showing a close-up of a person's hands planting a small seedling into the soil. The person is wearing a sandal. The background shows some dry vegetation and a rocky ground.

## *Lesson 4*

# **PLANTING CHURCHES IN *MISSIONAL* ZONES**

A black and white photograph of a street scene in a town. The street is paved and lined with simple, single-story buildings. A few people are walking on the street. In the background, a church with a steeple is visible. The image has a textured, cracked appearance overlaid on it.

## Objectives

- To understand the biblical foundation for church planting in missional zones.
- To learn from the experience of other planters.
- To identify the steps of church planting.

## Main Ideas

- The apostle Paul first implemented the strategy of planting churches in new missional zones.
- Planting new churches in missional zones is the Mesoamerica Region's strategic plan for evangelism.
- In order to plant a church, the support of a mother church or church planter is required.

The author of this section is **Rev. Ulises Solis Jimenez** who has served as a missionary in the Mesoamerica Region since 2003. Six new churches and 15 missions have been planted through his ministry in the region.

The **North Central Mesoamerica** field includes Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua.

*God used the apostle Paul in an amazing way as a church planter, and that is due to the fact that Paul allowed the Holy Spirit to guide his every step.*

When we study the Word of God, we find examples of God's servants who worked in different contexts as church planters. What is the key to the success of their ministries? The key is that they allowed the Holy Spirit to use them.

In this lesson, we will study the Apostle Paul's strategy for starting new projects in new mission fields with diverse cultural backgrounds. We will also study church planting in the 21st century, which requires new methods, plans, and strategies. We will pay special attention to the strategy being used in the Church of the Nazarene on the Mesoamerica Region, and we will learn about the experiences in church planting in missional zones in the Mesoamerica North Central Field.

## Pauline Strategy

*Here we will see the strategy for church planting in the book of Acts.*



Paul's goal was to win the lost for the kingdom of God. Where did Paul's passion come from? First, Paul became committed when God called him for a specific mission "...to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15). These words were in Paul's mind and heart, and he repeated them in all of his conversations.

Secondly, Paul understood that his ministry was taking place in a strategic time in God's plan. The church was in a process of expansion, and it was crucial that all the other towns, countries, and tongues heard the good news of salvation. Paul understood that God permitted the persecution of the first Christians so that the gospel would spread. "Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

Paul was bold in implementing new strategies. He was a man filled with passion for spreading Christ, opening new missions, and nurturing the new churches.

Paul's mission strategy for church planting consisted of intentionally looking for geographic areas the gospel had not yet reached. Paul would go to these places, and he would plant a new church. In Romans 15:20, Paul summarized his strategy in these words, "It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation."

Paul developed a successful strategy of establishing churches in key geographical areas, where the seed of the gospel could spread to other Gentile populations in the Roman Empire. His purpose, once again, was to proclaim the gospel where Christ had not yet been preached. In spite of his ministerial success, Paul was still humble. He constantly declared in his letters that it was only by the grace of God that he was a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, and that his life purpose was solely to preach the gospel and offer the new disciples as holy and pleasing offerings to God (Galatians 2:7-8).

Paul's ministry focused on reaching the urban centers strategically located around the Mediterranean Sea, where the gospel could spread inland and towards other areas in the Roman Empire. Upon arrival, he would study the city in order to find the most strategic places where he could start his ministry, and he would identify places where people were buying and selling, worshipping, or dialoguing on topics of interest.

Sometimes, he would speak in synagogues where he would preach to fellow Jews about Christ. If he were rejected, he would speak to the Gentiles with the same amount of passion (Acts 18:4-6). This strategy was implemented in Thessalonica, a philosophers' hub at the time; he started a church there within three days of his arrival (Acts 17:1-4). Later, he moved to the city of Corinth, where he planted another church (Acts 18:1-11).

As a good follower of Jesus Christ, Paul wanted to glorify Christ in all he did (Galatians 6:14). The lesson we learn from this evangelist's attitude toward Gentiles is amazing! If we are glorified, it should be in Christ and not in our own ideas and achievements. Everything we do should be done for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

## Personal Strategy

***Now we will learn about the author's experiences on planting new churches.***



Throughout our time serving as District Superintendent in the Central District in El Salvador and as pastor in the San Bartolo Church of the Nazarene, my wife and I have put the Pauline strategy into practice.

First, we would choose a town where there was no Church of the Nazarene. Then we would take time to visit our local churches, and see if they had family members in that town to help us start the church. If the people responded positively, we would make a plan so they could set up a

*Paul was bold and creative in implementing new strategies. He was a man filled with a passion to announce Christ, to open new missional fields and to plant churches. He took care of the people and disciplined them before leaving them in the care of a pastor that he had trained and whom he continued to supervise through letters.*

Some of the churches Paul founded through his missionary journeys were in these cities: Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, Colossae, Ephesus, Rome, and others.

***Thessalonica:*** Capital city of the Roman province Macedonia. Paul stayed there for very little time because of the persecution, but he and Silas still managed to put down the foundations of the church, leaving it established with Jews, Greeks, and a large number of prominent women (Acts 17:4).



way for us to meet with their loved ones, with whom we would visit and share the gospel.

It was in these people's homes that we would establish our first preaching points in the town we wanted to reach. Each new believer was given follow-up and also disciplined by a group of Christians from the local church.

Further along, when the preaching point was mature enough to become a "Mission-Type Church," we would establish a lay pastor (consecrated and committed to the Lord and his will) to take charge of the mission. This leader was not stranded; in fact, he or she would receive support from those from the mother church who were already working at the preaching point.

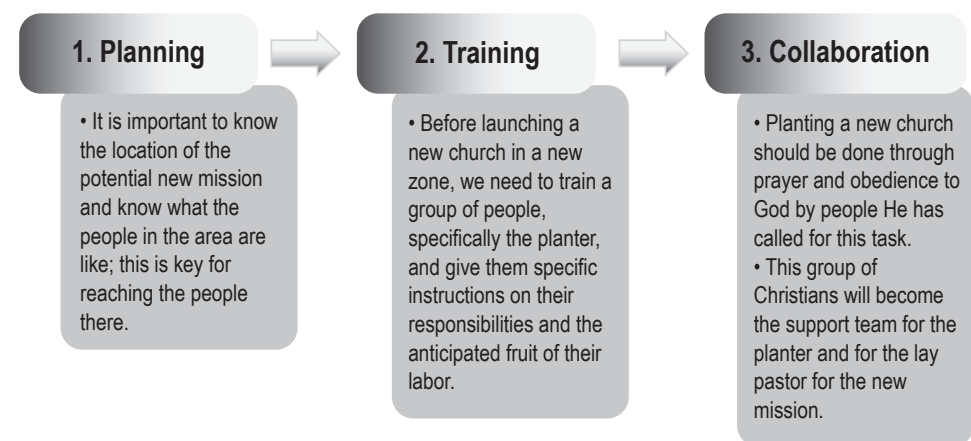
*"I planted the seed,  
Apollos watered it, but  
God has been making  
it grow"  
(1 Corinthians 3:6).*

The new lay pastor's responsibilities were clearly explained. He or she needed to prepare the services after the style of the mother church or of an organized church, and to establish a leader for each ministry department: Nazarene Missions International, Sunday School Ministries and Discipleship, and Nazarene Youth International.

God generously made this missionary project grow. The local church board also greatly supported this ministry, providing finances for the lay pastor and renting a place for the new mission to use. The mother church did this for two years, as the new mission grew stronger and developed into a new church.

Today (2014), we serve as Evangelism and Discipleship Coordinators in the Mesoamerica North Central Field (CA-4). In this field, we face the challenge of planting churches in contexts that are very diverse and different. We have come to realize that the strategies that work in some areas do not work in others. That is why we encourage missional zone planters to be guided by the Holy Spirit and be willing to be used by the Lord. We know that the growth in new projects is all God's doing, and he will reward each planter in accordance to what she or he has done (1 Corinthians 3:7-8).

Altogether, there are three fundamental things I have learned in my personal experience with church planting that we need to keep in mind before planting a new church in a new zone:



# Missional Strategy

*Now we will learn about the church planting strategy of the MAR Region.*



The Regional Evangelism Office has been working with the missional zone evangelism strategy for church planting under the leadership of Dr. Bernie Slingerland, Regional Coordinator of Evangelism. This strategy was first implemented for a period of three years in the Northeastern Missional Zone in Guatemala.

Rev. Julio Lem led the project under the supervision of the Regional Coordinator of Evangelism. When it comes to evaluating the strategy, we ask ourselves: does this strategy really work for planting churches? The answer we come to after thinking it over is the following: this plan has been successful, and that is due to its solidly Biblical foundation, and to the fact that it is carried out as an act of obedience to God, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Let us look at the main aspects of this regional strategy:

**1. God's plan.** God's will is for all to hear the good news of salvation in the countryside, towns, cities, and nations (Luke 24:46-47). For example, the planting of a Church of the Nazarene in the Maguila community in Fray Bartolome de las Casas (Alta Verapaz, Guatemala) began with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They started a new project in this community half an hour from Fray with the support of the First Church in Fray and the district superintendent from Franja Transversal. The First Church of the Nazarene in Fray sponsored the Missional Zone Planter and supported their pastor as they spread the gospel in Maguila every week. Even though it started out as a low-budget project, with the help of a Jesus Film team from Illinois, USA, the mission-type church was organized. God always supports us when we are obedient to his calling.

**2. Context.** The church that was planted in Maguila, a very traditional community where no one spoke Spanish but instead a language called q'eqchi', obviously took some time to develop. The context was completely different than Fray. This is why they planned for a year before going out. They discussed it with the District Superintendent, the planter, and the members from the mother church in order to get support, and to have their help in planning a Maximum Mission in Maguila, with the goal of planting a new church. The DS was very optimistic and committed to the project. He also influenced the pastor (who influenced the mother church board) to get involved with the project and to offer support. Together, the team and its planter finally established a preaching point in the Missional Zone.

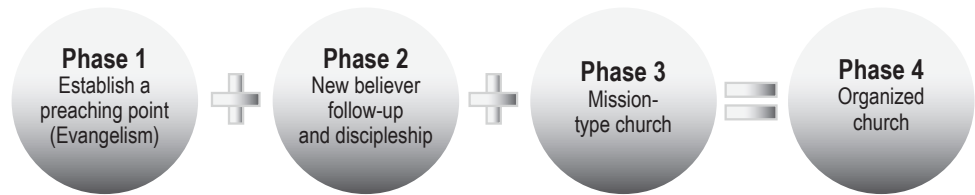
**3. Joint Effort.** After a couple of months, the local church bought a lot in Maguila. They raised their own funds for a roof, which is where the new church was planted and organized (February 2013). Planting this new church was a result of the hard work and effort made by the members of

*"The missionary enterprise is no human conception or undertaking, no modern scheme or invention... It did not originate in the brain or heart of any man, not even William Carey, or the Apostle Paul. Its source was in the heart of God Himself. And Jesus Christ, God's great Missionary to a lost world, was the supreme revelation of His heart and expression of His love."  
(Robert Hall Glover)*

the mother church, who embraced the vision to plant a church in this Missional Zone.

**4. Individual Commitment.** What do we need in order to implement this strategy for planting new churches? The first thing we need is willingness to do God's will, and God will work in accordance to his purposes. The second thing we need is determination and willpower. When there is enough willpower to reach goals, obstacles are overcome, and a new enthusiasm is born that encourages other people to be involved in the work in accordance to the plan, and all the arrows of discouragement the evil one aims at us can be destroyed (Ephesians 6:16).

Planting churches in missional zones is possible, though it demands commitment and teamwork. In our experience, we know it is possible to plant a new church in one year when following this four-phased process:



Today, the congregation in Maguila has 46 members and a strategic location. We thank God for guiding and supporting this project, the planters, and the mother church that so fiercely supported the project.

## The Planters

*In this last section, we will see the requirements for Missional Zone Planters.*



To conclude, it is important to mention the basic requirements for Missional Zone Planters (MZP) on the Mesoamerica Region.

- ✓ The MZP has a good, Christian testimony at all times that reflects God's holiness.
- ✓ The MZP has exemplary conduct and ethics. If he or she has a bad testimony, morality flaws, or marital problems, he or she cannot participate.
- ✓ The MZP serves under the authority of the leaders in the Church of the Nazarene. The project needs to be approved by the district superintendent and Advisory Board.
- ✓ The MZP agreement will be valid for one year, and can be renewed with the necessary approvals for another year.
- ✓ The MZP planter is a member with a good reputation in the Church of the Nazarene.



# Activities

Time

20'

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Examine the strategy described in this lesson for choosing a missional zone. What requirements should the geographic zone, town, or city have in order to be a missional zone? Write all the characteristics that come to mind.

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2. According to the author's experiences shared in this lesson, respond to the following questions:

- a) How would you choose new preaching points in Missional Zones if no one in the mother church had family members in that community?
- b) What evangelistic tools would you use to start a preaching point?
- c) What would be the role of the mother church and its members when planting a new church?

3. In groups of three or four, make a list of characteristics, spiritual gifts, and ministerial experiences that a church planter should have for your context.

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4. In the same groups, answer this question: How can we find more people in our district who have these characteristics in addition to having the call, passion, and willingness to be a church planter?

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*Lesson 5*

# MULTIPLICATION STRATEGIES


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## Objectives

- To identify the most often used multiplication strategies.
- To be involved with a multiplication strategy.
- To value the role of the mother church in the development of new churches.

## Main Ideas

- Among the many multiplication strategies in the church, there are two that we have used that yield good results: *Each One Win One* and the *To Be Like Him* plan.
- For a new church to have healthy growth, it is necessary to have a mother church's support, and to develop a local leadership group that is committed to the new project.

## Introduction

**David Webb**, author of this lesson, has been serving as a missionary in the Mesoamerica Region since 2006. He lives in Costa Rica with his wife, Shelley. He has contributed to the formation of 8 new missional zones in Nicaragua, 5 in Costa Rica, and 3 in Panama.

God has called us to be a church without walls. He desires us to be as interested in reaching the people outside the church as we are in taking care of the people inside it.

In his last recorded words before ascending to heaven, Jesus affirmed that he was leaving the church with a very special legacy. This legacy consisted of and still consists of reaching the lost. *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”* (Acts 1:8, with author’s emphasis).

You can see that I emphasized “and” throughout the verse. Jesus declared that planting and multiplying the Church needed to start immediately, beginning right where they were, and this needed to continue until his Second Coming.

## Where Do We Begin?

*“We can reach our world if we will. The greatest lack today is not people or funds. The greatest need is prayer”*  
(Wesley Duewell,  
[www.azquotes.com](http://www.azquotes.com)).

**No matter what strategy we use, we need to start with prayer.**



*“The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field”* (Matthew 9:37-38). Almost all of God’s big movements in the history of the Church were preceded by prayer. Even though Jesus taught about prayer and lived a life of prayer, we have few records of his “requests.”

That is why it is so important when Jesus says, *“Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”* There are three requirements for reaping a spiritual harvest. First, we need to realize that God is the Lord of the harvest. Second, we need to realize that the harvest is plentiful. Third, we need to pray to the Lord of the harvest, asking him to send workers, meaning those who are ready to plant new churches for the Lord.

# False Beliefs

*Next we will see some erroneous concepts in church multiplication.*



When we think of church planting, many times we picture a building under construction. The first misconception is that a new church needs its own building. If all the churches around the world waited to have a building before starting to minister to the community, there would be a lot of people who would be lost for eternity, and the church's presence would never come close to the world's population growth.

Another misconception is that the only people who can minister are "professional" ministers, for example, a pastor, a missionary, or an evangelist trained at a theological institution. However, the truth is, all the people who attend church have the responsibility of sharing the gospel, and the church leaders are the ones who are responsible for teaching them so they can minister with excellence (Matthew 5:14-16). No pastor has the time or capacity to take all the responsibility for evangelizing and serving the needs of the community. This needs to be taken care of as a congregation; it is the calling of all of Christ's disciples.

Finally, people think that church planting is for people with a specific call for this project. However, as previously mentioned, all believers need to be trained to share their testimonies and to evangelize. New Christians will be the ones with the most non-Christian friends, and potentially the most productive evangelists in the church, since they can reach out to their family members and friends. The church should have high expectations in regards to the ministry God has given each new believer, since we are all called to go and make disciples of all the nations (Matthew 28:18-20).

In the same way, all active believers become partners in the church-planting project, whether it is in a home, workplace, garage, or outside.

## The Mother Church and Local Leadership

*Next we will study the necessary elements for multiplication to occur.*



Two key elements for church planting are to have a mother church committed to the church plant and to have a host family in the new community. Even if the denomination's leaders authorize the project and the local churches are all in agreement, it is vital that there be a mother church to support, encourage, and provide the material resources and people when necessary.

Even if the denomination provides funds for planting a new church, those funds can never substitute for the ministerial help and push a mother church can give.

*What are the benefits for the spiritual life of a new believer when he or she gets involved in evangelistic ministries?*

*Even if a denomination provides the funds for a new church to be planted, those funds can never substitute for the ministerial help and support a mother church can give.*



In Costa Rica, almost all the successfully planted churches depended on the support of a committed mother church. An example of this is the church planted in the community Tres y Tres. This is a community that resisted evangelical churches for a long time. The mother church in Barrio San Jose, Alajuela, Costa Rica, traveled every two weeks for two years to this community.

After the initial opposition, the community started to accept the new project because of the constant testimony of love and commitment the members of the mother church showed. These members traveled three and a half hours to have a service two Fridays a month in Tres y Tres. On Friday nights, they slept on the floor in one house. On Saturday, they spent time discipling and teaching the new believers before going home Saturday night to prepare for the service at the mother church on Sunday morning.

The mother church was committed to this new church plant and to the discipleship of the new workers. As a result, there is a living and growing Church of the Nazarene in Tres y Tres.

Something we need to highlight from this experience is that it was a family that lived in Tres y Tres that asked the mother church to go to this community. The members of this family had connections with some members in the mother church in Barrio San Jose who were completely committed to developing this new church. They opened the doors of their home to the mother church, and now they are key leaders in this new church.

## Possible Multiplication Strategies



***In this section, we will study two strategies that have been used in this Region.***



There are a lot of strategies for starting new projects and multiplying the number of churches. Two strategies in particular that God has used to bless the South America Region and the Mesoamerica Region are *Each One Win One* and the *To Be Like Him* plan. Whether you use these strategies or another one, it is essential to choose a plan to follow. Remember that people do not plan to fail; rather, they fail to plan. Let us take a look at some of the strategies we use in the Region.

### **1. Each One Win One**

*Each One Win One* is an evangelistic plan designed and promoted by Louie Bustle and Stan Toler. *The Each One Win One* strategy combines well with the big brother/sister strategy, and with a strategy of opening prayer cell-groups in those areas where members want to plant a church. God has blessed us with this plan, which can be validated by the number of churches that have been planted in South America.

**a. Personal Prayer:** *Each One Win One* starts with a time dedicated to prayer, a series of sermons on evangelism, and a time where personal



to start prayer groups in other places where that group can become a new and separate church.

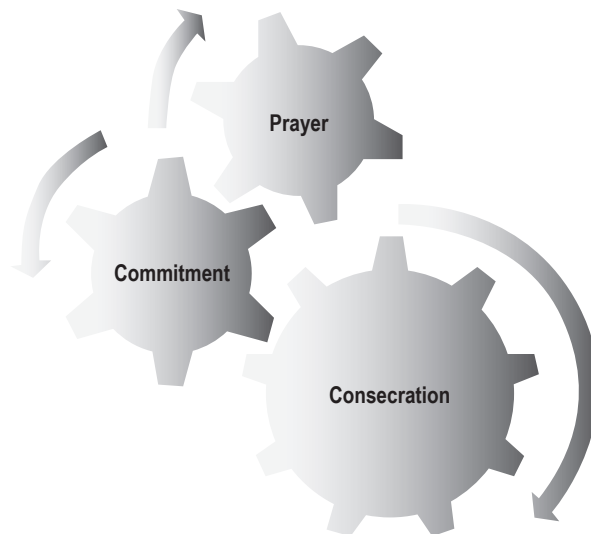
Prayer cell-groups are made up of believers who get together in homes under the leadership of a member responsible for leading the group. Each meeting should last an hour or less, so that those who have to work the next day will be motivated to keep attending. The program is simple:

- A time to share testimonies
- A time to worship
- A time of Scripture reading from the book of Acts
- A time of prayer for the group's requests and to pray for the non-Christian friends and neighbors of each member

The pastor of the church meets weekly with the leaders of the cell-groups to train, revise the order of the meetings, encourage, advise, answer questions, and evaluate the progress of each group.

After three months, the groups should celebrate to thank God for answering their prayers. The non-Christians the groups have been praying for should be invited to this service. The service's program is simple and consists of:

- Testimonies of prayers and answers from God
- An opportunity to share the gospel or an invitation to an upcoming event
- The announcement by the Pastor that the time for the prayer cell-groups has ended
- The opportunity to continue meeting one night of each week. If the answer is positive, a new mission is born.



## 2. To Be Like Him

Another church planting strategy is the *To Be Like Him* plan developed by Bernie Slingerland. God has used this plan in a powerful way in the Church of the Nazarene in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. This strategy, like the one before, involves lay leaders starting new churches in homes.

Prayer is, once again, fundamentally vital. The church planting plan *To Be Like Him* has seven principles based on the example of Jesus' ministry: consecration, prayer, compassion, promotion, evangelism, discipleship, and participation. This plan is already explained in more detail in Lesson 3 of this book.

In Luke 19, we read about one of the most surprising conversions in the New Testament. After meeting with Jesus in his home, Zacchaeus decides to give half of his riches to the poor and decides to repay those from whom he took money at the rate of four times the amount he took from them (Luke 19:8). How did this happen? It all happened because Jesus took time to be in Zacchaeus' community.

Jesus went to communities that were hungry for the Word. Jesus did not let the chance to teach Zacchaeus pass him by. After Zacchaeus' dramatic declaration, Jesus explained his great mission, "*For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost*" (Luke 19:10). In the same way, the *To Be Like Him* strategy focuses on bringing the lost to Jesus' feet. Jesus calls churches to unite in this "search and save" mission.

Are you willing to pray for God to show you what way he can use your church to plant a new mission in a needy community? Start praying for God to show you his will, and then start a prayer cell-group in your home or become a spiritual big brother or sister.

*"You are the only Bible some unbelievers will ever read, and your life is under scrutiny every day. What do others learn from you? Do they see an accurate picture of your God?"*  
(John MacArthur, [www.christianquotes.info](http://www.christianquotes.info)).



### WHAT DID WE LEARN?

The church multiplication strategies that have been used successfully on the South America and Mesoamerica Regions are the *Each One Win One* and the *To Be Like Him* plans. These strategies only have good results when there are committed disciples.

# Activities

Time

20'

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *“People do not plan to fail; rather, they fail to plan.” What are the consequences or results of deficient planning in the evangelism ministry?*

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2. *If your local church had deficient planning in the evangelism ministry... what recommendations would you give to the evangelism leaders? Write four concrete actions that can be implemented in a short period of time to reverse the situation.*

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3. *In groups of 2 or 3, answer the following questions. The author of this lesson affirms that, “Two key elements for church planting are to count on a mother church and to have a host family in the new community.” Are these elements present in your congregation? What can you do to improve it and start a new mission or cell-group?*

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4. *In groups of 3 or 4, answer the following questions. The author affirms that it is wrong to think that, “church planting is for people with a specific call for this project.” Do you agree with the author? How could you involve other members of the church in the church-planting ministry?*

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A black and white photograph showing a person's hands planting a seed into the soil. The person is wearing a sandal and is kneeling on the ground. The soil is dark and rich, and there are some small plants and rocks scattered around. The background is a bright, overexposed area.

*Lesson 6*

# EVANGELISTIC PREACHING

A black and white photograph of an open Bible resting on a table in a church. The Bible is open to a page with text and a small illustration. The table is covered with a patterned cloth. In the background, there are rows of wooden pews and a doorway leading to another room. The lighting is soft and even.

## Objectives

- To value evangelistic preaching as a tool for salvation.
- To define the key components of effective evangelistic preaching.
- To use the tool of evangelistic preaching.

## Main Ideas

- All believers are responsible for preparing themselves in the best way possible to preach the salvation message with excellence.
- An evangelistic sermon's message, authority, and power are what make it effective.

**Ariel Fuentes Martinez,** author of this lesson, has served as a pastor for 14 years. He is currently pastoring the Parcelacion Moderna Church of the Nazarene in La Habana, Cuba.

*Herald: Messenger. Daniel 3:4 refers to the public announcer who transmits the king's message. 2 Peter 2:5 refers to a preacher who transmits God's message.*

In the Middle Ages, it was common in public places to see certain colorful characters called “heralds.” When they appeared, they got the immediate attention of the people who were in the streets and city plazas: the people knew they were officials with authority for communicating a message from the king. These officials spoke loudly to announce the will of the sovereign king that governed those villages. The heralds went from town to town, announcing the king’s decrees.

Today, the mediums of communication are much more sophisticated, and information is exchanged much more quickly. We can see exactly what is happening on the other side of the world as it happens. At a glance, it would seem as though there is no longer a need for heralds in this modern world. However, there is still a king who is waiting for his message to be announced, and that king is our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords. When he sent his disciples to spread the good news, he said, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go... And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age*” (Matthew 28:18-20).

Every generation of Christians has had the privilege of being heralds for the one true king, announcing his good news. Now it is our turn to carry the torch and serve as his heralds. In this lesson, we will study evangelistic preaching, which is one of the most effective tools that allow us to continue expanding God’s kingdom in this world through church planting.

## The Relevance of Evangelistic Preaching

***Proclaiming the gospel contributes to planting new churches.***



There are thousands of valuable resources available for communicating the gospel message, which allow for many to be reached in a short period of time. However, evangelistic preaching (or proclaiming the gospel) continues to be an irreplaceable divine method for calling people to salvation. The apostle Paul emphasized this in his letter to the Corinthians, saying, “*For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe*” (1 Corinthians 1:21).

God continues to use this method of preaching the gospel, even though there are many who think it is foolish. Wherever a leap of faith has been taken with this method, new churches have been planted. However, even though unbelievers sometimes look at the preacher as though he or she were some strange character out of a painting from the Middle Ages, we cannot run from our responsibility of being the King's heralds.

Jesus sent us, saying, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15); "and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47) and "you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8b).

Those disciples heard the call directly from Jesus' lips. The Church started to proclaim the good news of salvation in Jerusalem, and it continues to be proclaimed today. Each generation of disciples is called to continue and complete the task in every corner of the earth.

In the ministerial context in which we serve, we are responsible for using this method with the same excellence with which the first generation of heralds did. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

In places where a church is not yet present, it is necessary to have people who will go and preach so that the people can know the truth. The preaching of the word of salvation leads to church planting, because once people hear the message and convert, they need a place in which to congregate, be discipled, and learn to serve God with their lives.

## The Success of Evangelistic Preaching

**Next we will see three important factors in evangelistic preaching.**



Just as we saw in the last section, evangelistic preaching is pertinent because it is timeless. Its success is guaranteed so long as these three factors are taken into account:

### 1. The Message

Heralds did not communicate their own message: they were the king's spokesmen and had to be faithful in proclaiming what they were told to say. The same can be said about us, since we have a specific and important message to communicate to people. The good news consists of the joyous proclamation of God's redeeming work in Jesus Christ in order to save mankind from sin's slavery.

We cannot expect any amount of success if our message is not founded on the authentic gospel of Jesus Christ. It is not about announcing any

*"In preaching there is power! The power of the Spirit is the power of the Word. As the Word is proclaimed, the Spirit is busy working in the mind and heart of the hearer"*  
(Carl J. Sanders).

*Why do Christians feel embarrassed to become preachers of the gospel?*



random “good news,” rather it is about announcing the good news of Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ is not the center of our proclamation, we will be sidetracking from the true gospel, and the message will not be effective in convicting people of their sin no matter how interesting, attractive or instructive the message may be.

In addition to Jesus Christ needing to be the center of our proclamation, our words need to consist of a clear presentation of Christ’s message in regards to repentance and putting faith in Jesus Christ for salvation from sin and for a new life as children of God. In Acts 17:30-31, Luke sums up the message, saying, *“The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”* Therefore, the message we proclaim should lead people to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

## 2. The Authority

Heralds were not just simple speakers--they were given authority, so that those who opposed them knew there would be consequences because they were opposing the king who had sent them. We, just like the first disciples, are also witnesses with royal authority.

Jesus sent his disciples out with authority. Matthew 10:1a says, *“And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority...”* Later on, he also sent out 70 disciples and told them, *“Behold, I have given you authority...”* (Luke 10:19). Finally, before ascending to the heavens, he directed the disciples who were there, saying, *“... All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you...”* (Matthew 28:18-20).

He who has all power and authority in heaven and on earth is the one who sends us. He has given us his authority with a defined purpose: make disciples. The word in the English New Testament that is translated as “authority,” is *exousia* in the original Greek, which means legitimate, real, full power that is ready to act or take possession, control, or use of something or someone. It is Christ who trains us with his authority to make the ministry he has called us to, a reality.

## 3. The Power

As Jesus Christ’s heralds, we not only have the authority he has delegated to us, but he has also given us his power. What does that power consist of? The Greek word *dynamis* that translates as “power” in Acts 1:8 is like a type of energy in believers, and it is a requirement for announcing the gospel. *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses...”*

*The authority to preach and make disciples is not just for pastors or professional ministers, but instead it is for the entire church. Every committed Christian should take classes at the local church/ seminary in order to become an excellent preacher and discipler.*

*What are the false signs of power that we see in some preachers who try to attract multitudes to follow them?*

In the time when the disciples heard these words, it was clear to them what message they needed to proclaim. In addition, they were conscious of the authority Jesus had given them. Even so, they were not yet permitted to start their task of announcing the good news; they needed to wait until “power” came upon them.

Jesus had promised them that he was going to fill them with his power. *“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”* (Luke 24:49). Jesus was referring to the power of the Holy Spirit: the only power that can transform sinners, regenerate their lives, and make them children of God.

As Christians, we do not only testify that Christ rose from the dead with God’s power, but we also testify that that same power that rose Jesus Christ from the dead has transformed us in the same way. If we do not receive power, we are testifying about something that we have not actually witnessed.



## Our Leading Role in Evangelistic Preaching

*Next we will see the conditions for being leaders in this task.*



The factors mentioned in this chapter are not beyond the reach of any child of God. Though there are specific spiritual gifts that lead some believers to be more effective in this task, we can all participate and be heralds for the kingdom. Evangelistic preaching is not limited to a handful of Christians: we can all be leaders in this role.

The right message, the authority, and the power are available to those who fulfill these conditions:

### 1. Be a serious student of Scripture

Jesus Christ and the salvation offered through him is the central theme of Scripture. It is the task of every child of God to know what the Bible teaches on the subject. We need to be like Philip who, *“... beginning with this*

*What are the negative consequences for the church when people with insufficient training are sent out to preach the gospel?*

Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus” (Acts 8:35). Can you connect any passage in Scripture to Christ’s salvation message? Only if we are well prepared will we be successful in preaching “... with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace” (Ephesians 6:15).

Those who hunger for the Word value receiving teaching from their teachers more than life: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” (Romans 10:15b).

## **2. Remain constant in prayer**

Prayer is the school that teaches us to wait and depend on God. To be heralds of Jesus Christ without surrendering to prayer demonstrates arrogance and results in inefficiency and mediocrity. The apostles waited to receive power through prayer, and although they did not have many resources, the power of God was enough for them to proclaim the good news.

“Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives...they all joined together constantly in prayer...” affirms Acts 1:12-14. This is where the big secret of the primitive Church’s effectiveness lies: they prayed to receive the power of God. If there is anything the church today needs—and every believer in particular—it is to pray so that the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit will manifest itself in our lives in the same way it did in the lives and ministries of the apostles.

## **3. Maintain a close relationship with the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is more than an experience in a moment of individual prayer or in a sublime moment in a public service. It is not “something we need to do,” rather, it is “someone who wants to lead us,” just as the Spirit did with the first Christians. It was the connection between them and the Holy Spirit that made them real heralds, proclaiming the good news from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.

In Acts 4:31, it says, “After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.” When they made decisions, they could say, “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...” (Acts 15:28a).

In an individual’s experience, those who were heralds of the gospel like Philip received specific instructions, “The Spirit told Philip, ‘Go to that chariot and stay near it’ (Acts 8:29). We can only be heralds if we connect with the Holy Spirit.

## **4. Connect with the community of faith**

No authentic herald of Jesus Christ can be completely independent. The herald who does not connect with a group of believers does not have the approval of the king. The evangelistic proclamation needs to come from a community of faith. Yes, it is the Lord who sends, but he does it through the community of faith.



# Activities

Time

20'

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *What have been your experiences as a herald? Share a personal testimony with the class.*

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2. *Evaluate your relationship and connection with the Holy Spirit by answering these questions:*

- a. How are you doing with your personal devotions?*
- b. Do you consult the Holy Spirit in all your decisions before acting on them?*
- c. Is maintaining a permanent connection with the Holy Spirit, praying in every moment and place, part of your life?*
- d. Do you obey the Holy Spirit when he directs you to go and speak to a certain person?*
- e. Do you follow the Holy Spirit when you pray, interceding for people and circumstances he brings to mind?*
- f. Do you seek the direction and wisdom of the Holy Spirit before studying the Word to prepare and present an interesting and effective class, sermon or other biblical teaching?*

3. *Based on your answers to the questions above, what changes are you going to make in order to have a more effective and significant relationship? Share your answer with a group of 3 or 4, and receive advice and ideas from others.*

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4. *Prepare a teaching on evangelistic preaching for the next class you teach. Keep in mind that it needs to have a Christ-centered focus and needs to present the gospel clearly. You can ask for help from your teacher, pastor, lay preacher, or mentor. You can set up a practice time outside of class for sharing your message with your peers and teacher, and thus receive evaluation and recommendations for improvement.*



*Lesson 7*

# PERSONAL EVANGELISM



## Objectives

- To identify the strategic advantages of planting house churches.
- To learn to build relationships with neighbors.
- To understand the correlation between satisfying needs and evangelism.

## Main Ideas

- Every Christian is a potential evangelist and a living testimony of God's love for humanity.
- Already existing relationships with family members and friends can open doors for efficient and genuine preaching of the gospel.

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Evangelism is based on God's infinite love and grace, so that the act of evangelizing comes out of the heart of the Father who never stops searching for people to bring into communion with the Creator. Evangelism is not a product of some kind of training or from an evangelist's own passion, rather it flows from God to each and every one of his children. God is the one who awakens the desire inside of us to prepare ourselves and share the good news of salvation with others. Each disciple becomes a platform for God to use to transmit his salvation message. However, for an evangelist to be effective, it is necessary to have God constantly working in his or her life.

In this way, in order to be the medium and tool that God uses to reveal himself, the believer needs to allow God's grace to transform his or her life. A constant relationship with God and complete dependence on him are essential. Evangelists need to allow God to completely transform their lives in order to turn them into workers in his redemption plan for humanity. The Word teaches that God produces a yearning in the believer's heart. For an evangelist to be effective, it is necessary for God to be constantly at work in the person's life.

God invites us to co-participate, to walk together in a life of holiness, and to invest each day in that project of love, being announcers of the message of salvation to all those who do not know him.

## Types of Relationships

*As beings created in the image of God, humans are relational by nature.* 

*"...for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose"  
(Philippians 2:13).*

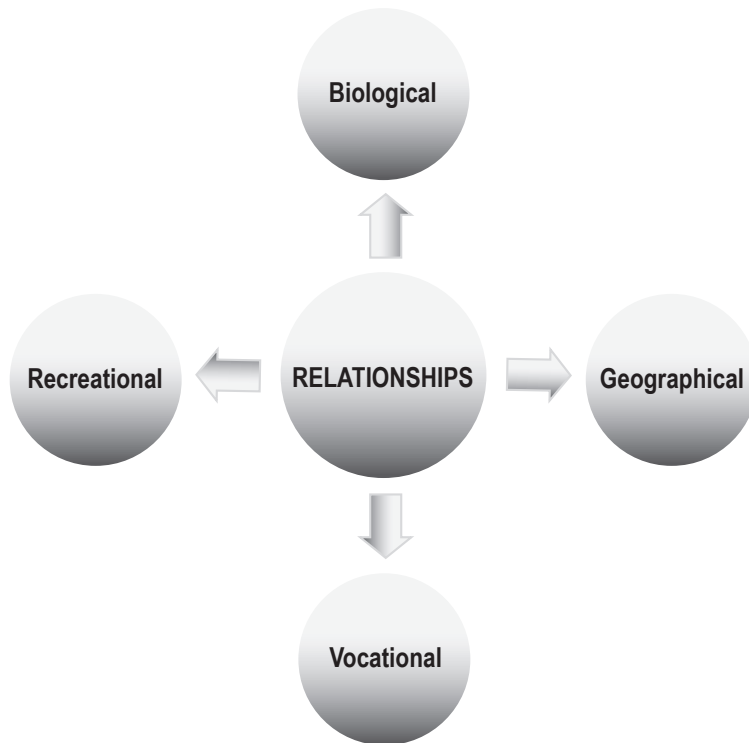
A human being is social by nature, created to enter into relationships with other individuals. All people are connected to other people. In this interpersonal interaction, as human beings we have four main types of relationships:

- 1. Biological Relationships:** These fall into the family context (parents, sons/daughters, brothers/sisters, cousins, grandparents, uncles/aunts).

**2. Geographical Relationships:** These include the people we know because they live near us (neighbors).

**3. Vocational Relationships:** These are the people we meet because of work (employers, supporters, clients, colleagues, providers, etc.).

**4. Recreational Relationships:** These involve the people we play sports with or share with in other outdoor activities.



*Relational evangelism consists of sharing the gospel in a personal context with acquaintances, family members, neighbors, and friends without manipulation, without forcing it on them, without pressuring them, and without harassing them to conversion. The goal is to provide follow-up so they can grow as Jesus Christ's disciples.*

Following Jesus' example, Christians need to participate in relational evangelization. Author Ray Bakke in his book *A Theology As Big As The City* (2002) shows that the true mission is not based on a passer-by or traveler mentality, but instead the evangelistic mission is about building relationships with people in order to influence their lives.

In that sense, we need to be attentive towards our communities and have Christ-like attitudes. In other words, just as Jesus did, we need to be quick to respond to any need that arises in our area, whether it is the physical, emotional, social, or spiritual need of an individual or of the community. Therefore, just as Bakke affirms, we Christians are responsible for being the gospel incarnate by moving deliberately and strategically in broken communities (Bakke, 1897: 55).

From that point of view, it is through this strategy of building relationships that opportunities for sharing the gospel are facilitated. Thus, we can share the gospel in a personal way with others in order to form them into Jesus' disciples.



# The Christian and His/Her Relationships

*Learn ways to build relationships with those who do not know Christ.*



**Prevenient Grace:**  
*This is the work of the Holy Spirit in the unbeliever, drawing them toward a relationship with God.*

If the best strategy is to build relationships, then Christians should seek, develop, and maintain their interpersonal relationships, especially with non-Christians. This does not mean one should distance him or herself from other Christians, since these relationships are the ones that sustain, encourage, and help; however, the best place for evangelization is found in establishing relationships with those who have yet to know Christ.

In these times that we live in, interpersonal relationships are weakening, possibly due to lack of interest in friendships with others. However, the truth is that every person needs to find support in other people in whom he or she can trust. Christians can satisfy this need by offering their friendship or becoming relevant in other people's lives. By encouraging the development of transcendental ties with other human beings, God's love can be shared and used to guide them into a spiritual relationship with the Lord.

The spiritual relationship, as Brian McLaren proposes in his book *More Ready Than You Realize* (2006), is an intimate relationship that Christians can share with others, a relationship where Christian love is made visible. It is not about imposing our traditions as Christians; rather, it is about connecting and showing our love, values, and Christian actions to others.

In order to better understand how we should share the good news with other people, McLaren proposes eight aspects that the evangelism process should include so that it happens naturally. Although we cannot say there is a simple formula for building relationships (since relationships are personal and extremely complex), these tips McLaren gives provide us with a guide to put evangelism into practice and make disciples by building relationships with non-Christians. Let us take a look at the eight characteristics:

*Making friends is indispensable in order for people to decide to become members of a church.*

<b>Relational</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Look to make friendships with non-Christians (neighbors, friends, etc.). Show them God's love through actions and conversations, without the intention of converting them right away.</li></ul>
<b>Narrative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listen to people's life stories, share your story and God's story.</li></ul>
<b>Community based</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wait for the right moment for the conversion to happen in an authentic Christian context. This should occur when the person is interested in knowing God after witnessing a Christian's life.</li></ul>
<b>Holistic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider the making of disciples as a process that lasts a lifetime, not as only the next step after conversion.</li></ul>
<b>Guided by the Holy Spirit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be aware of the fact that God has been working in these people's lives. There is no heart that the Holy Spirit, with his grace, cannot soften.</li></ul>
<b>Mutual Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In the discipleship process, everyone learns. Non-Christians have a lot to teach us, and we Christians have God's great truth to share.</li></ul>

**Missional**

• Understand that we are participating in a mission from God that produces changed lives here and now, not just after death in eternity.

**Serving**

• Evangelism begins with service. This servant attitude towards others is part of our identity as servants, and so for this to happen, we need that disposition.

To summarize, personal evangelism starts in the development of relationships with non-Christians; and for that to happen, we need to invest time and energy into getting to know people. So now it is time to evaluate: how are we evangelizing? Are we planning on using evangelism methods that will only produce numerical results? Do we waste time and energy on things that produce very little fruit? If we are developing ministries that focus on the community as an outreach, is the point to make genuine friendships with the people whom we serve? It is important to stop, take time to pray, meditate, and evaluate the quality of our relationships with nonbelievers.

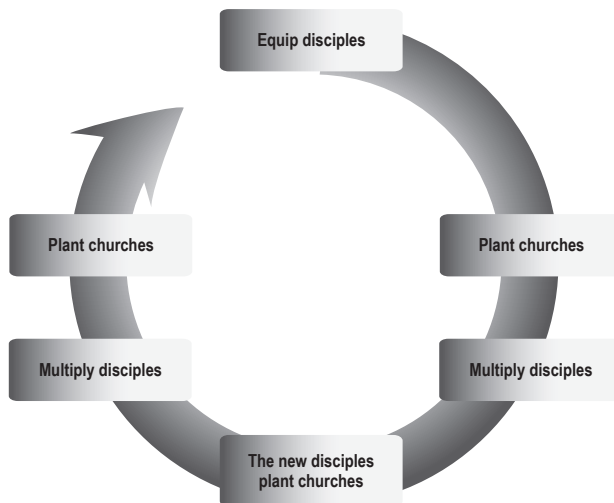
## Moving Forward Toward a Church Planting Movement

*Church planting surges from the motivation to make disciples.*



Church planting is nothing new, and it has always been motivated by the search for the lost. This is where God’s mission for reaching the nations with the good news becomes concrete in the church planting movement. The importance of church planting resides in the fact that new believers need a local body of believers with whom they can worship, fellowship, and serve in order to develop as Christians.

The Key to Growth in 2 Timothy 2:2



The multiplication and reproduction movement of churches was founded on this Scripture: “*and the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others*” (2 Timothy 2:2). This key verse about growth consists of equipping disciples in order to plant churches that will multiply with the right leadership.

So, it is clear that the most important resources for winning the lost are the Christians who have been taught and prepared to be evangelists and church planters. We are responsible before God to use the human resources he has placed in our ministries, because each Christian has great potential for fulfilling God’s mission. Therefore, since there is an evangelist and church planter in every believer, it is crucial to teach them through discipleship so they can put the holy doctrine into practice in their lives and one day become a discipler.

Sharing the good news is not about touching hearts through an eloquent speech; rather, it consists of touching each person through concrete actions that show Jesus Christ’s love for them and God’s will for their lives. There is a need for us to draw close to those who do not know God in order to gain their trust through service. It is not about loudly telling them the gospel from a distance; it is about getting to know people at a deeper level with the purpose of multiplying the body of Christ. The proposal for evangelization is spiritual friendship. Although the search for God is an individual journey, it still requires companionship from a community that will stimulate the individual.

Examples of this relational evangelism can be found in various biblical passages. Among them, we find John the Baptist speaking about Jesus to his disciples (John 1:35-37), the disciples inviting their friends and family to follow Jesus (John 1:35-50), and Jesus Christ himself, the greatest example of relational evangelism, who maintained the relationship with his disciples all throughout his ministry, teaching and discipling them as well as drawing near to those around them (for example, the Samaritan woman). These people became followers of Christ, and being led by the Holy Spirit, they spread the message of salvation, establishing churches all over the Roman Empire.

## Reasons for Planting House Churches

***Next, we will see some motives for getting involved in this movement.***



Church planting begins with the desire to open our own hearts to the people we want to reach. One of the best ways of doing this is opening the doors of our homes in order to offer a time for a Bible study, spiritual support, and fellowship. The primitive church multiplied with this strategy, since Paul went from house to house, teaching and strengthening believers (Acts 20:20) and groups of believers met in homes (Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:19).



# Activities

Time

20'

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If you have had an experience of talking to a friend about Christ, answer the following questions. After you finish, share it with the rest of the class.

a. How did this conversation begin?

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b. What type of situation led you to share the gospel with this person?

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c. What was the result of this conversation?

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2. Make a list of people you want to reach (neighbors, colleagues, family members, etc.). Write down when you think you will see them during the week and also write some ideas for conversation starters, for example: sports, family, sickness, work, etc. (You can make a list of questions in order to discover their interests, likes, needs, worries, etc.)

Name	When I will see him/her	Topics for conversation

3. In groups of 3 or 4 students, take time to intercede for these people. Pray that the Lord will open doors in order to facilitate a relationship and friendship with each of these people and, later on, to be able to share Jesus with them.

4. Read Acts 2:41-47 and answer:

a. What activities did they do in the church building and what activities did they do at home?

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b. Which were more effective? Why?

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A black and white photograph showing a close-up of a person's hands planting a small seedling into the soil. The hands are positioned to hold the plant steady while the soil is being worked around it. The background shows some dry vegetation and a rocky ground surface.

**Lesson 8**

# PLANTING HOUSE CHURCHES

A black and white photograph of a group of people sitting around a table in what appears to be a community center or a church. They are engaged in conversation and eating. One person is wearing a hoodie with the text "UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SPRINGFIELD" visible. The setting is casual and communal.

**PLANTING HOUSE CHURCHES**

## Objectives

- To study biblical passages about planting house churches.
- To identify the steps for planting house churches.
- To be conscious of the mentality required for a church planter.

## Main Ideas

- Even though there are hundreds of sanctuaries and buildings for churches, there is no better place to start a new congregation than in a home, just as the first disciples did.
- We cannot plant churches without being open to God transforming and renewing our minds to be like Christ.


## Introduction

Today we minister in a society that is constantly changing and presents various needs and problems that demand special attention from the church. These needs challenge the church to change its methods and evangelistic strategies. Families are severely affected as waves of evil and violence threaten them, even from within these homes. Many people today are looking to leave God out of their lives. Our job is to continue spreading the gospel of the kingdom to these families.

**Jorge Ivan Mex Nabte**, author of this lesson, has been serving as the Coordinator of Evangelism in the East District in Mexico since 2006 and as a pastor at the Rey de Reyes Church in Cancun, Mexico since 2010. Maxima Mission projects, prayer groups, and a new mission have been started under his leadership.

As contemporary churches, we face the challenge of contextualizing the message. The same gospel presented by the apostles in the first century and the gospel that has been preached by Christians in centuries before us has not changed and never will, but we need to find new ways to share it.

Modern times demand us to change our methods; not changing them puts us at a disadvantage, because people today have a different, revolutionized way of thinking. The church is urged to prepare itself and make use of all possible mediums to communicate the message of the cross in a relevant manner in this society.

 How are people today different from people 50 years ago?

When we become involved in planting a church, we have many questions, for example: What do I do first? How do I do this? What do I need? In this lesson, we are going to answer those questions and consider how to generate a trusting environment, so people allow us to share the life-changing, kingdom gospel in their homes.

## What Does the Bible Say About Planting House Churches?

*Next, we will see some examples of house churches in the New Testament.*



The method of planting house churches is unquestionable; it is a practice that God used for the extension of his kingdom from the very beginning of

the Church's history. Next, we will take a look at the records left behind by authors of the New Testament books about this practice:

- Aquila and Priscilla had a church in their home. *“The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their **house**”* (1 Cor. 16:19). *“Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus...Greet also the church that meets in their **house**”* (Ro. 16:3, 5a).
- Philemon's house church: *“Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker— also to Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier—and to the church that meets in your **home**”* (Philemon 1:1-2).
- Nympha's house church: *“Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her **house**”* (Col. 4:15).
- Discipleship in homes: *“You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to **house**”* (Acts 20:20).

The church of the first century did not focus its efforts on constructing buildings; rather, it focused on the proclamation of the message of the gospel, which resulted in the extraordinary multiplication of new disciples and people reconciled with God through faith in Jesus Christ. When carefully analyzing the New Testament, we can see that the platform or environment for evangelism was homes. Why in homes? Is it because it was the perfect place for interpersonal relationships? Is it possible to have a better and more understandable presentation of Christ's gospel in a home? In my personal experience, I have seen great receptivity to the Word when the message is presented in homes.

It was not too long ago when we started having meetings in the house of a new family, thanks to the arrangements by a woman from our congregation. During the month of April in 2014, we had our first meeting. What a blessing it was to have, other than the hosting family, three neighbors attend and show interest in continuing to attend the meetings. What a blessing it was to be part of the extension of God's kingdom in people's homes! Just as the Church began in the houses of the first believers, it is important to continue this still effective method today.

## Serving with the Mind of Christ

*Now we will see some essential aspects related to Christ's mentality.*



In the Bible, we find that God's will for his children is that we live in holiness and obedience to him. For this to be possible, we need to maintain a life of purity, completely surrendered, without reservations, to the service

***Aquila and Priscilla** helped establish the church in Corinth in their home, and then moved to Rome where they started another church in their own house.*

***Philemon** was a well-known citizen in Colossae. He was converted through Paul's ministry and was known for his piety and compassion (Col. 4:9, Philemon 1:1-7). **Apphia** was possibly his wife. **Archippus** seemed to have been his son and the pastor of the church.*

*No one is sure if **Nympha** was a man or a woman, but we do know that the church met in Nympha's home in Laodicea.*



of the Lord. In order to be church planters, it is vital to be consecrated disciples, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies *as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God*—this is your true and proper worship” (Romans 12:1).

The renewing of our minds is important in the process of serving God and doing his will. “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed *by the renewing of your mind*” (Ro. 12:2a). If we are going to initiate an evangelism project in a home, it is necessary to be guided by the Holy Spirit. Our mind needs to be aware of what God wants for the people to whom we will minister. Here we see the importance of having Christ’s mentality in a permanent way.

Next we will see the characteristics of the mind of Christ that God wants to give us in order to expand his work in people’s homes:

#### **a) A Mind for Reconciliation**

In the following passages, the Bible talks about God’s purpose of reconciling people with himself in order to restore them and give them life in abundance. This should be the main goal in our thinking when we enter a new place in order to spread Christ’s kingdom.

*“...that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation”* (2 Cor. 5:19).

*“...and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross”* (Col. 1:20).

*“Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior”* (Col. 1:21).

#### **b) A Mind for Transformation**

Once the reconciliation process is initiated in the life of the individual, we will most definitely see a change since the Lord’s purpose is to transform the life of sin into a life of holiness. God is the only one who can do this, which is why it is so important for this goal of **“transformation”** to be kept in mind.

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here”* (2 Cor. 5:17).

*“I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh”* (Ezekiel 11:19).

The Bible talks about a lot of transformed people, men and women who walked the path of sin, but after drawing close to Christ were transformed. God continues his redeeming work on this earth. We constantly hear testimonies about this transformation at local churches.

Paul uses the verb **“to reconcile”** in Romans 5:11, 11:15, and in 2 Cor. 5:18-19 in order to explain that we are called to implore the unbelievers to be reconciled with God as an answer to the salvation work that God in his infinite love has made possible through Jesus Christ.

Can you share some examples of how God has transformed the way you think?

I am also an example of transformation. At 15 years old, I left my family with a heart full of hate and regret. I was an alcoholic and smoked cigarettes; I frequented dangerous parts of the city and lived in complete rebellion. When I was 17, I was invited to a teen camp led by the First Church of the Nazarene in Cancun. That was the first time I had ever heard about NYI. Before that, I was a teenager who blasphemed the Scriptures; even so, God started something special in my life, and all that was left was a confrontation with Jesus and the decision to accept him as my Lord and Savior. That is exactly what happened on that precious night... what would have happened to me if that NYI had not organized that teen camp?

Just as I gave my life to Christ at that camp, many people feel more comfortable surrendering their lives surrounded by people they know and with whom they have things in common. Services held in homes are some of the best places for church multiplication, thanks to the Christians' willingness to open their homes so that others will have the chance to receive Christ.

### c) Mind for Multiplication

Other goals we need to keep in mind when planting house churches is the multiplication of disciples. We are responsible for doing our part, so God can transform lives and increase the number of disciples daily. God's will is that his kingdom is extended, and that happens when each church advances in the multiplication of Jesus' disciples.

*"Those who accepted his message were baptized, **and about three thousand were added to their number that day**" (Acts 2:41).*

*"The Lord's hand was with them, and **a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord**" (Acts 11:21).*

*"They preached the gospel in that city and **won a large number of disciples**. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch" (Acts 14:21).*

The numerical growth of new disciples is important. Why do some churches today present such weak growth? Is it because instead of focusing on the task of making disciples, we fix our attention on the administrative aspects of the local church? Why should we conform to having small growth percentages of 10% or less? Why don't we keep our minds trained on goals from God, who does not want anyone to perish but for all to repent? And what better place to do it than in homes, where we can share with people in a family environment, witnessing God's love and guiding them towards growth through discipleship.

### d) Mind for Education

Ever since I was born again, I have seen many believers decide to return to their old lives after a couple of years in the Lord's paths. They get discouraged or simply the fire they had for God fades away. I still do not understand this type of conduct, but I have noticed that as a church, we are not teaching the kingdom's truths correctly.

*"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."  
(2 Peter 3:9)*

By teaching, I am referring to providing intentional discipleship, based on Christ's model; He has given the example on how to make disciples and how to teach others to live in this world as holy sons and daughters of God.

*"Jesus went throughout Galilee, **teaching** in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people" (Matthew 4:23).*

*"They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were **teaching** the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead" (Acts 4:2).*

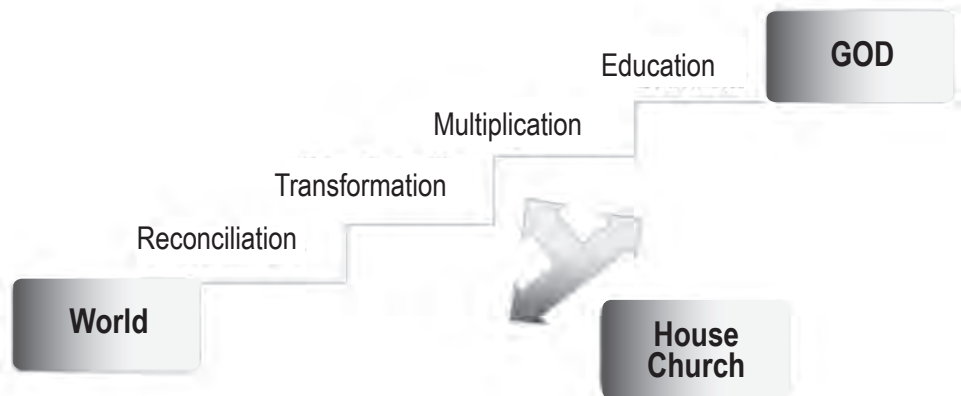
*"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for **teaching**, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).*

What are the consequences for a Christian's life, for the church, and for society when a superficial disciple is formed?

Jesus' model of intentional discipleship is the one we need to follow in order to plant churches. Are you an intentional discipler? Are you ready to teach others to be holy disciples?

This discipleship is not a series of theoretical lessons; rather, it is about sharing Christ's life. The teaching is supported by example; in other words, a holy life is learned by observing the master in action. This discipleship requires having clear goals and a good strategy for teaching, just as Jesus did, in a variety of occasions and different places (by the ocean, outside, in private, from a boat, etc.).

The following model summarizes the characteristics from Christ's mind that a house-church planter should have, and these principles remind us that God is sovereign over all we do and all we are. Human beings need to go through a process in order to draw closer to him and have the same mind as Christ's in the ministries we are called to do.



A house church serves as a bridge between the world and God, and acts as an agent of reconciliation, transformation, multiplication, and education. It is important to remember that, when starting a house mission, we turn into a community of grace for that neighborhood: a community committed to serving in love and making disciples out of the new believers.

# Steps for Planting House Churches

*In this last section, we will number the steps to follow for starting and consolidating a church in a house.*



## 1. Offer myself to God

The first step in any ministry is consecration and asking God to show us his purpose, his plan, and his vision for the church.

## 2. Renew my mind and be directed by the Holy Spirit

We need to make a plan of action with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The following questions can be helpful:

-For reconciliation: What evangelism method will we use? EvangeCube? The four spiritual laws? Jesus Film?

-For transformation: What form of inspiration will we offer to new believers? Bible studies? Holiness meetings? Spiritual retreats? Conferences?

-For the multiplication of disciples: How can we help new believers share their personal testimonies? How can we equip them for personal evangelism?

-For education: What discipleship model will we provide? We recommend using the ABCDE discipleship materials provided by the Church of the Nazarene in the region; its levels include basic, intermediate, and advanced.

## 3. Plan for the project and have resources on hand

What is needed in order to start in a new home? The first thing to do is to talk to someone in the congregation who feels led by God to open his or her home for that purpose. This person does not necessarily have to be a leader of the group, just a host simply making his or her home available.

What kind of resources do you have available? If you have a TV, you can show various kinds of evangelistic movies, including the Jesus Film, Magdalene, etc. If you have a musical instrument, use it, etc.

## 4. Execute the project

Here is where, after prayer and coordination with the pastor and other leaders, the project is carried out. Surely we will learn new things along the way as needs arise and we face challenges, but with help from God and leaders, we will reach our desired goals and be witnesses of the wonders of God.

## 5. Evaluate the project

Every project needs to be evaluated, which allows us to appreciate the progress, the errors, and the needs. This allows us to proceed to make

The Church of the Nazarene in the Mesoamerica Region provides materials for discipling new believers at different levels, starting from when they first accept Christ to training them to serve in accordance with their gifts and personal calling. This plan is known as the ABCDE Discipleship program.

necessary adjustments for improving and advancing towards planting new churches in homes.

A good time to evaluate is when the group grows. This is a good time to ask: Should we leave the house and go to a community building or a church for more space? Do we need to buy a lot, build, or rent a bigger building? Can we multiply this church by opening another cell-group in another home?

It is our prayer that this last lesson from this book gives you clear ideas so you can become a fruitful house-church planter.



## WHAT DID WE LEARN?

Planting house churches is an excellent way to expand God's kingdom when it is well-planned and done with commitment. Church planters need Christ's mentality so they can be agents of reconciliation, transformation, multiplication, and education.

# Activities

Time



## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. What is the difference between planting a house church and planting a church in a church building? In your opinion, what are the advantages and disadvantages?

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2. Explain how you would plant a house church. What steps would you follow?

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3. When we take on the challenge of planting a new church, why is it important to have Christ's mindset?

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4. In this lesson, we looked at four characteristics of the mind of Christ that are essential for house-church planters. Complete the following chart after discussing and agreeing as a group on your answers.

	Mind for reconciliation	Mind for transformation	Mind for multiplication	Mind for education
How is this mentality acquired or obtained?				
What does the world think that is contrary to Christ's way of thinking?				
What is the risk for a church authorizing a planter that does not have this mentality?				
What fruit should this mentality produce in a planter's life?				
What fruit should this mentality produce in the planter's disciples?				
What fruit should this mentality produce in the community surrounding the house church?				



# Final Evaluation

Time

15'

## COURSE: CHURCH PLANTING STRATEGIES

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_  
Church or Study Center: \_\_\_\_\_  
District: \_\_\_\_\_  
Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of this evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Which church planting strategies studied in this course were new to you?

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2. Mention two arguments in favor of planting churches in homes.

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3. In your own words, write a definition of relational evangelism.

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4. What have you learned in the practical ministry component of this course?

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5. In your opinion, how could this course be improved?

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