

Planting a Missional Church in the Suburbs

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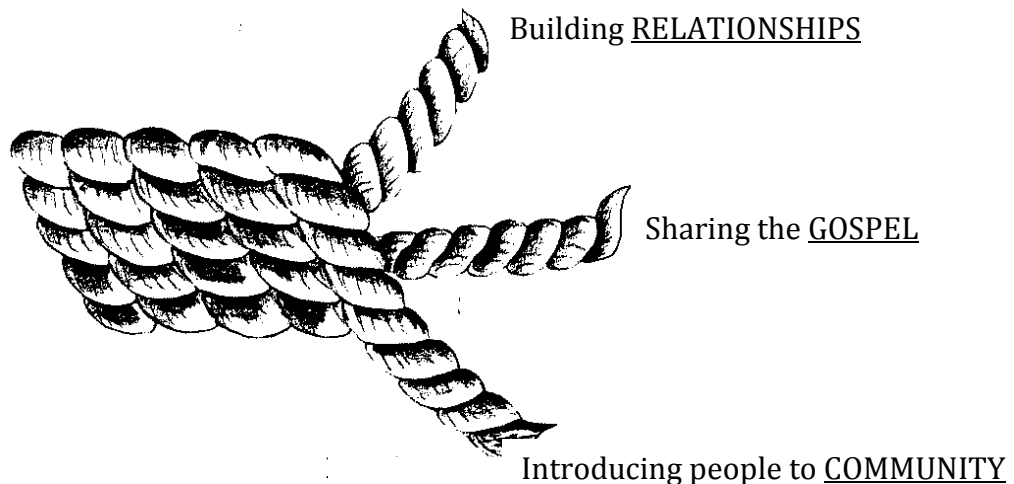
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Basics of Missional Church

1. Develop the MINDSET of the church as a missionary force in culture.

- A missionary is somebody who relationally takes the unchanging gospel into a culture for the cause of Christ, understands people in that culture, learns the questions of that culture, understands the worldview of that culture, and begins a church in that culture that proclaims the unchanging truths of Scripture in the changing cultural context. In the same way, a church that is 'missional' views itself as a missionary to its culture, filled with ambassadors for Christ who take the gospel into every sphere of society.
- "A missional church avoids ever talking as if non-believing people are not present. If you speak and discourse *as if* your whole neighborhood is present (not just scattered Christians), eventually more and more of your neighborhood will find their way in or be invited." (Tim Keller, "Missional Church")

2. Embrace evangelism as a COMMUNITY project.



- "Not all of us are eloquent or engaging. Not everyone can think on their feet. Some people are simply not good at speaking to strangers and forming new relationships. One of the practical benefits of the three-strand model of evangelism is that it gives a role to all of God's people. By making evangelism a community project, it also takes seriously the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit in distributing a variety of gifts among his people. Everyone has a part to play: the new Christian, the introvert, the extrovert, the eloquent, the stuttering, the intelligent, the awkward. I may be the one who has begun to build a relationship with my neighbor, but in introducing him to community,

it is someone else who shares the gospel with him. That is not only legitimate; it is positively thrilling!" (Chester & Timmis, *Total Church*)

3. Create a **COUNTER-CULTURE** that shows the world how the gospel radically changes us in every way, especially in regards to sex, money, and power.

Lessons in Planting a Missional Church in the Suburbs

1. Get their **DIGITS**.

- You have to work at getting to know people – doesn't just happen.

2. Ask people if you can **INTERVIEW** them.

1. What are the three best-kept secrets of the Southeast Valley
2. How would you describe the cultures and attitudes of people in the Southeast Valley?
3. What community needs are going unmet in this area?
4. What do you think are the greatest spiritual or emotional needs of people in the Southeast Valley?
5. How would you describe the spiritual climate of the Southeast Valley?
6. This is a challenging question...If you had to prove that God is alive in the Southeast Valley, what would you point to prove it?
7. What advice would you give to somebody that was helping start a new church in the Southeast Valley?
8. Who are three other people who care about the community and might be able to offer additional insights?

3. Redeem kids activities and sports with missional **FOCUS**.

- Great opportunity to think plural.
- Get the birthdays of every kid on the team and throw a team party every time there's a birthday or a holiday.

4. Establish **SIMPLE** connection points for community.

- In the suburbs, people have to work to find a community.
- Consistent events.
- One-step signups for Community Groups.

5. Confront some key **IDOLS**: comfort, security, autonomy, children, money, etc.

- You **HAVE** to preach on money more than you want to!
- People will listen to you confront them if they see integrity in your life and they trust that you love them.

6. Create an excellent SUNDAY experience.

- Unchurched tend to be very traditional – expect church in a building on a Sunday morning and expect to be able to “come and see.”
- People are used to systems, stores, etc. that are professional, clean, well-organized. There must be a reason that chain stores do better in the suburbs than local shops. That said, it’s OK to try to have a neighborhood/unique flavor of a locally owned store, but you better have the excellence of a chain.
- This often takes attention to detail that many church planters don’t have.
- This means good music that fits the culture – not Mars Hill music.

7. Constantly evaluate and improve your PREACHING.

- Just preaching accurate doctrine is NOT enough to reach people.
- You are not going to just go “pull a Chandler” – you MUST improve!
- Experience is not the best teacher—evaluated experience is
 - What’s your grid for evaluation?
 1. Did he give me a reason to listen?
 2. Did the sermon consistently hold my interest?
 3. Did I sense that the preacher really cared about the audience?
 4. Was there a unified, main idea? What was it?
 5. Was the sermon faithful to the author’s intended meaning of the text?
 6. How was the gospel preached as the solution? Or was I simply told to try harder?
 7. Did the sermon challenge and motivate me to change? If so, how? If not, why not?
 8. Did the sermon give me hope? If so, how? If not, why not?
 9. Did the illustrations enhance the points? Which illustrations were best? Why?
 10. Could somebody new to church understand all of the terminology used?
 11. Would I have wanted my unchurched friends to hear this sermon? Why or why not?
 12. Did he have the material mastered?
 13. Delivery: Did he have good eye-contact? Did he use effective inflections? Did he move too much/little? Did he have good gestures? Was he animated? How fluent was he (‘uhs,’ ‘ums,’ etc.)?
 - What’s your process for evaluation?

8. Teach children in a way that is fun for them and WORRY-FREE for parents.

- Anywhere else that people drop off kids has high security standards (gym, movie theater).

9. Have a plan for marriage COUNSELING and building marriages.

- Unchurched people are going to need help. How will you help them?

10. Make it EASY to invite people to everything.

- Postcards, web-based tools.

Recommended Resources

Church Planting

- Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*.
- Ed Stetzer, *Breaking the Missional Code*.
- Tim Keller, *Church Planting Manual* -
<http://www.redeemer2.com/rstore/category.cfm?Category=23>
- Nelson Searcy, *Launch: Starting a New Church from Scratch*.
- Tim Chester & Steve Timmis, *Total Church*.
- Tim Keller, *Evangelism: Studies in the Book of Acts* (pdf) -
<http://www.redeemer2.com/rstore/category.cfm?Category=65>
- Tim Keller, *Studies in Prayer: Developing a Strong Prayer Life* (pdf) -
http://www.redeemer2.com/rstore/moreinfo.cfm?Product_ID=523

Preaching

- Tim Keller, "Preaching to the Heart" (audio CDs) -
http://store.gordonconwell.edu/product_p/bsh-040506-acd.htm
- Andy Stanley, *Communicating for a Change*.
- John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching*.

Systems

- Nelson Searcy, "Church Leader Insights Podcast" (available on iTunes)
- Nelson Searcy, *Fusion: Turning First-time Guests Into Fully Engaged Members of Your Church*.
- Nelson Searcy, *Maximize: How to Develop Extravagant Givers in Your Church*.
- Andy Stanley, "Systems: Repairing the Transmission" (audio mp3) -
<http://store.northpoint.org/leadership/conference-messages/06-drive-repairing-the-transmission.html>
- Andy Stanley, "Volunteer Systems: Changing the Plugs" (audio mp3) -
<http://store.northpoint.org/leadership/conference-messages/06-drive-changing-the-plugs.html>

Leadership

- Mark Driscoll, *Confessions of a Reformation Rev*.
- Andy Stanley, "Andy Stanley Leadership Podcast" (available on iTunes)
- Colin Marshall & Tony Payne, *The Trellis and The Vine*
- Larry Osborne, *Sticky Teams*.
- Bill Hybels, *Axiom*.
- Andy Stanley, *The 7 Practices of Effective Ministry*.
- Gene Getz, *Elders and Leaders*.
- Tim Keller, "Leadership and Church Size Dynamics" (pdf) -
http://redeemercitycity.com/library.jsp?Library_item_param=477

Counseling

- Tim Chester, *You Can Change*.
- Mark Driscoll, *Death by Love*.
- Gary Thomas, *Sacred Marriage*.
- Tim Keller, *Counterfeit Gods*.
- Ray Pritchard, *The Healing Power of Forgiveness*.