

Church Planting with a Core Team

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Preface

In church planting there are two common teams: a Core Team and a Launch Team. They are vastly different, and their differences are outlined below. This lesson concerns the Core Team.

CORE TEAM	LAUNCH TEAM
Stable Team intended to be pillars the church can be built upon.	Temporary team that ceases at the Launch.
Open only to strong apostolics: called, confirmed, sent, and committed.	Open to anyone with a sincere desire to help launch the church.
Help minister in both outreach (follow-up, teach Bible studies, disciple) and in-reach (spiritual development).	Focus on outreach and community connections.
Meets for spiritual growth and development.	Meets to plan and engage in Launch events.
Consistently engaged (weekly) in prayer and other spiritual development meetings.	Meets on public open formats (bi-monthly at the most).

Introduction

The biblical principle of reproducing “according to one’s kind” is established early in Genesis, even being mentioned six times in the first chapter. Grass reproduces grass, herbs herbs, fruit trees according to their kind, aquatics, birds, and land creatures after their kind. Sheep reproduce sheep. Humans reproduce humans. Jesus asks, “Are grapes gathered of thornbushes or figs from thistles?” (Matthew 7:16) and makes a literal statement, “That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6). Everything reproduces after its own kind!

Within the church, apostles reproduce apostles after their own kind, prophets prophets, and teachers teachers.¹ Churches reproduce churches. If the church is a body, as referenced thirty times in the New Testament, it takes a church body to birth another church body. The most natural and biblical way to birth a church is to train and send a church-planting team from the local church: the mother–daughter church planting model. Herein, a church body sends out a duplication of its body’s DNA, a representative team with the expectant result to, in time, also give birth to a church after its kind. “I know of no other way disciple-making was practiced in the New Testament other than through a local church. Church planting is not the work of a single individual. Whenever one endeavors to plant a church, it must be done collectively and in cooperation with the church body at large.”² Church Planting with a team is the New Testament model!

Jesus’ Pattern

¹ See Acts 13:1 and the example of the Antioch Church.

² Sistrunk, Scott, *Church Planters Handbook. Among the Reapers, A Compilation of Writings by Church Planters*, Edited and compiled by Lee E and Judy C Wells (St Louis: United Pentecostal Church International, 2012), 43.

- First, and most importantly, Jesus is uniquely present when two or more people join together in His Name (Matthew 18:20).
- Jesus' priority was to call the twelve. Then, He sent them forth two by two, so they would not go-it-alone (Matthew 10:5-10; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6). Jesus also appointed seventy unnamed disciples and sent them out two by two (Luke 10).
- Jesus entrusted the church in the hands of The Twelve³. The explosive birth of the New Testament church on Pentecost did not catch heaven off guard! Jesus prepared for the growth by training and equipping a team not only handle the immediate explosive growth of the Jerusalem church but also the subsequent growth in Judea, Samaria, and then to the rest of the known world! So must we.

Apostolic Pattern

The disciples' replication of Jesus' DNA (team utilization) is seen throughout the Acts of the Apostles:

- Samaria: "Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God [through Philip's preaching], they [the mother church] sent Peter and John to them" (Acts 8:14, brackets added). Through team collaboration [Philip + Peter and John], a church was birthed and confirmed amongst the Samaritans.
- Gentiles: Peter and six men from the Jerusalem Church brought the gospel to Caesarea (Acts 10:1–11:18).⁴
- The rest of the known world: "Men from Cyprus and Cyrene" started the church in Antioch. When Jerusalem heard the news, they sent Barnabas, who affirmed the news and joined the Antioch team. He left Antioch in search of Saul, whom he brought from Tarsus to also join the Antioch team. Together, "for a whole year **they** assembled with the church and taught a great many people" (Acts 11:19–25, emphasis added).
- God expands the ministry influence of Antioch though the team method. It was as certain prophets and teachers ministered (Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul) that "**the Holy Spirit said**, 'Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which **I have called them**.' Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, **they sent them** away [Barnabas, Saul, and John Mark]" (Acts 13:2–3, emphasis added). Notice the New Testament pattern: the Spirit said... and the church sent. Let this be among us!
- "Paul and his party set sail⁵" to plant numerous churches throughout the Asia-Minor, always reporting back to Antioch (Acts 13-19). Paul, during his missionary journeys, enlists thirty-two team members to assist in church-planting.⁶
- The Ephesus church, like Antioch, became a training center for reaching their region: "The school of Tyrannus... continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 19:9–10). So how did all of Asia hear the Word in two years? "And there accompanied him [Paul] into Asia Sopater of

³ Ephesians 2:20

⁴ Note Acts 10:23, 45; 11:12.

⁵ Acts 13:13.

⁶ Jones, Peyton, *Church Plantology*. (Grand Rapids, MI. Zondervan, 2019), 129.

Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus” (Acts 20:4). “Paul had leveraged this strategic church planting team of eight gifted, qualified, experienced church planters who banded together, yet were ready to be deployed across the local network of Asia in teams of two.”⁷

What Is a Team?

Paul says, in Ephesians 4:16, “from [Christ] whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.” “A team is the sum of its parts, which means members of a team rely on one another to accomplish outcomes.”⁸

Asq.org defines team as “a group of people who perform interdependent tasks to work toward accomplishing a common mission or specific objective.”⁹ Jon R. Katzenbach defines a church planting team as “a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.”¹⁰

Why a Team?

1. “Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls, it’s just too bad, because there is no one to help him. If it’s cold, two can sleep together and stay warm but how can you keep warm by yourself. Two men can resist an attack that would defeat one man alone. A rope of three cords is hard to break” (Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 TEV). We are better together than we are on our own; we are more confident, impactful, supported, and protected.

<p>“No one can whistle a symphony. It takes an orchestra to play it.” – H.E. Luccock Teamwork divides the task and multiplies the success.</p>
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2. Proverbs 27:17 proclaims: “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another”. No one is alone! To make yourself better, there is a mutual benefit making others better! A team has checks and balances; one person has the other’s back yet is willing to challenge another to be a better person.
3. “Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works. Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:24-25, ESV). Teamwork and encouragement go hand-in-hand and promote accountability, quality, and momentum.
4. The book of Acts teaches us that God raises up men and women in local churches to help that local church reproduce itself. Since the New Testament is dominated with a

⁷ Ibid, 120-121.

⁸ <https://asana.com/resources/groups-vs-teams>

⁹ <https://asq.org/quality-resources/teams>

¹⁰ Jones, Peyton, *Church Plantology*. (Grand Rapids, MI. Zondervan, 2019), 141

team concept in church planting, why would anybody want to do it any other way? It is the Spirit's approach!¹¹

5. Solomon teaches an important paradox concerning sowing and reaping: "There is one who scatters yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty" (Proverbs 11:24). Churches are not meant to hoard people but to intentionally train and scatter them. Hoarding leads to poverty; scattering leads to increasing. I have personally found this to be true.
6. The body is not one member, but many. Each unique. Each important.¹² Furthermore, it takes a broad-based ministry team approach to attract, win, retain, train, and send diverse saints:

"He Himself gave to *some* to be apostles, *some* prophets, *some* evangelists, and *some* pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ... joined and knit together by what *every* joint supplies, according to the effective working by which *every* part does its share, causes growth of the body for *the edifying of itself* in love" (Ephesians 4:11, 12, 16, emphasis added).

The community of a team embodies the "fulness of Christ." One ministry alone cannot provide the diverse training to equip the collage of God's people for their wide-ranging ministries.

7. The community formed within a healthy team is an important element found within the New Testament church. The very definition of church (ecclesia) infers "community with purpose." In ancient Greek, according to Thayer, ecclesia was "*an assembly, summoned or convened for the purpose of deliberating.*"¹³ The New Testament church represents a gathering of local people united in His Name (common-unity) to discern and carry out Christ's will through worship, teaching, conversion, encouragement, expansion, and sending. Let's look at Jesus' three uses of ecclesia in Matthew:

16:18 "And upon this rock will I build my ***Ekklesia***" – a new Theocratic Kingdom with Jesus as Sovereign and King, summoned or convened for the particular purpose of establishing this Kingdom on earth under His direction! His disciples were no longer slaves under the dominance of Caesar (Satan's puppet) but a self-governing body under the Head, Christ!¹⁴

18:17 "...tell it to the ***Ekklesia***. But if he neglects to hear the ***Ekklesia***..." Observe the context in which Jesus uses *Ekklesia* in Matthew 18:15–20:

"Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the **church**. But if he refuses even to hear

¹¹ Acts 13:2

¹² See 1 Corinthians 12:14-17.

¹³ Example: Acts 19:39.

¹⁴ Colossians 1:18; 2:10; Ephesians 1:22; 4:12.

the **church**, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. “Assuredly, I say to you [the church, under the Spirit’s guidance], whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:15–20, brackets added).

Jesus rests the final decision upon the deliberation and community agreement of the summoned and convened assembly! Further, Jesus is uniquely present when two or more people gather in His Name. Wow! You and your church-planting team have an opportunity to build the biblical model of the church: a local gathering of people in agreement (common-unity) in His name. There, God promised to dwell. A church constitutes more than one person: two to three at a minimum. Therefore, if a church begets after its kind, it takes a church, even if it is two or three, to produce a church!

How Do I Assemble a Core Team? Where Do They Come From?

The ideal core team will be made up of 6-12 people (a minimum of two or three, according to scripture). These individuals will become “pillar” leaders. Ideally, members will come from a “mother” or “sending” church.

1. The Mother Church

2. Quality leadership, capable of missional ministry, organically ascends, connects, and is sent by the working of the Spirit within a missional-minded local assembly fertile with trained and equipped leadership. The New Testament models of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Ephesus exhibit this. “Only to the extent that we can develop self-initiating, reproducing, fully devoted disciples can we hope to accomplish the task of Jesus’s mission.... If you can’t reproduce disciples, you can’t reproduce leaders. If you can’t reproduce leaders, you can’t reproduce churches.”¹⁵

3. Another Church

God knows the hearts He has prepared to team with you in His mission and is simultaneously calling complimentary ministries together. Pray it up. Wait on Him. If you feel God is directing you to invite someone/a couple from another church to join your church-planting team, the **first** (and possibly the **ONLY**) person you should contact is their pastor. Ask their pastor for permission to speak to the potential team member(s). If their pastor does not grant you permission the case is closed, and the potential person should never even know they were a potential! When God develops teams, it is always accomplished ethically. (See below in “Nice to Know”, *Ethics for Church Planters*.)

What Are the Essential Expectations of a Core Team Member/Couple:

Goal: A God-built committed church-planting team with maximum broad potential to provide the greatest opportunity to efficiently plant an apostolic church.

1. **Calling:** God’s personal directive into an *ongoing* transcendent purpose – in this case, a specific gift of service to plant churches. This call is characterized by a sobering obedient

¹⁵ Hirsch, Alan, *The Forgotten Ways*, Second Edition (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2016), 127.

surrender, accompanied by an urgent and pressing burden, often simultaneous with a holy God-dissatisfaction with the present. It is far more than just being intoxicated with passion, vision, or the novelty of a new project. They need a heart-bursting missional call!

2. **Confirmation:** “In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word [*rhema*] be established” [lit. – stand] (2 Corinthians 13:1b). One’s ministry must *stand* upon the *witness* and confirmation of those close to them and their leadership! The best test of a call is that a healthy church agrees with your call and sends you out as confirmation of your present work and passion. There is no biblical precedent for self-appointed, self-anointed, and self-sent ministries. Family must affirm gifts and calling. Unity must exist in the family before unity can exist within a church-planting team. The family must commit long-term to the church plant.
3. **Character:** inherent positive values that someone possesses, which they are unlikely to change and that helps to make an individual into the kind of person he or she is. A call, regardless how great, is qualified or disqualified by one’s character. The character qualities listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Titus 1:5-9 are a standard for core leadership. One must possess a biblical conversion, holiness expectations, and faithfulness in attendance and giving. There should be no known unresolved conflicts, excessive debt, or secret sexual sins. One must freely recognize and confess when they are wrong.
4. **A Burden that Drives Commitment:** In a church plant, all hands are on deck! There isn’t the luxury of ‘passengers!’ Church planting is not for the uncommitted, uninvolved, burdenless, fence-sitters!
 - a. **Prospect’s Life Advances the Church Culture:** Core team members will help the church planter devise a plan on how to live out and implement the vision and therefore must produce/model the culture within the church from the very concept.
 - b. **A Team Player:** They commit to the team their unique gifts and honor other’s gifts. They seek not their own but wholeheartedly support the vision, direction, wellbeing, and decisions of the team and Kingdom. Anyone who cannot exhibit a selfless, collaborative spirit on a team within the church, is not fit to lead a team within the church and certainly should not lead a team to start a church! Paul charged the Philippians: “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” (2:3-4, ESV). The energy of the core team must be wholly given to the advancement of the vision and not be exhausted by having to continuously carry other core members.
 - c. **A Burden** for the lost and the specific city, area, or people group of the church plant. They must be missional-minded.
5. **Pattern of Ministry/Experience:**
 - a. **Initiation:** The candidate must be a self-starter: have started a small group, ministry or are driven to start new things. The best predictor of future performance is present and past behavior. The test of God’s will is evidenced in fruit. Has the candidate exhibited initiative?

- b. **Engagement:** These individuals are involved, proactive, and trusted to work without constant supervision.
 - c. **Flexibility:** They typically are flexible and responsive to change; they understand, manage, and offer valuable input by looking at situations and potential problems from different perspectives.
6. **Chemistry and Communication**
- a. **Listen Actively:** core members listen to understand, not to answer. They freely ask questions for clarity.
 - b. **Openly Communicate:** keep other team members informed; readily shares information to keep the team on the same page.
 - c. **Problem Solve:** they bring solutions, not just point out problems.
7. **Mutually Accountable Transparency.**
- Make clear who you are (See Church Planter and Team Profile):
- a. Leadership style
 - b. Communication style
 - c. Education Level
 - d. Experience Level
 - e. Personality
 - f. What you celebrate/Pet Peeves

While these seven expectations are essential to core members, no one is going to score a perfect ten on all seven expectations. Look at the overall score. Look not for perfection but progression and solid potential. Tim Hein, offers important advice¹⁶:

Pray sincerely for God to call only the right people. Church planters have two temptations when putting together a team: The first is to look for people with the best abilities. The second is to take absolutely anybody. The first is borne of overconfidence, the second a lack of it.

- Church planters likely possess fearless optimism. However, optimism may breed overconfidence or even arrogance, which may lead us to presume our new vision deserves nothing but the absolute best. So, we go looking only for the “best” leaders and servants. Seek excellence, yet let God, who looks on the inside not the outside, guide you. Don’t overlook God’s Davids and Gideons!
- The second temptation comes a little later, when, frankly, we just hope people start turning up. Then, when they do and want in on our church plant, we’re thrilled and open for business. Be careful, here. Don’t let your biggest regret be that you were not more specific and focused about who was on the core team.

If the purpose of your new church is honestly missional – to reach an unreached part of the culture – you must know the mind of God concerning your target people-group, research that community very closely, and present that context clearly to potential team members. The hard work of prayer and contextual research demonstrates to the potential team members that the church will not be about them. Pull together

¹⁶ Adapted from <https://timhein.com.au/2016/04/12/five-ethical-principles-for-putting-together-a-church-planting-team/>.

demographic and historic information and complete a report on the missional needs of the city. Ask them to go away and pray concerning whether God is calling them to reach these people. Do not skip this work!

Ministry/Team Development

Not all these ministries are necessary to plant a new church. These are, however, ministries that can produce a dynamic church experience as well as offer numerous places for core and potential members to serve. Add these as God provides.

- Hospitality/Usher/Greeter Team
- Worship/Music Team
- Outreach Team
- Follow-up/Discipleship/Home Bible Study Team
- Finance Team
- IT/Tech Team
- Marketing/Social Media
- Children's Ministry Team
- Youth/Hyphen Team
- Small groups leaders
- Facilities/Maintenance Team
- Set up and Tear down Team

Either God's endorsement of the team will flood in undeniably or you will undeniably know that your team does not have Divine endorsement. Accept the Divine discovery, regardless of the outcome. Do not, under any circumstances, move forward without God's endorsement. Reorganizing, postponing, or dismantling a team is not failure; it is a God-direction!

In review, the most natural and biblical way to birth a church is as a trained and sent church-planting team out of a local church.

Nice to Know

Ethics for Church Planters

Ethics: a system of moral standards or principles (right and wrong; virtuous and non-virtuous; appropriate and inappropriate) that govern behavior or the conducting of an activity. Establish ethics early. Ethics discloses values. An ethical ministry glorifies God and validates one's Christ-like identity. Paul teaches, "A person should consider us this way: as servants of Christ and managers of God's mysteries. In this regard, it is expected of managers that each one of them be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:1-2, HCSB).

David counsels: "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, For I wait for You" (Psalm 25:21). Waiting on God is integrity and uprightness' preservative!

Wait on God, who, as Creator, understands the seasons! He knows the hearts He has prepared to believe. We must patiently and prayerfully join with Him in what He is doing. Violation of ethics often occurs when one rushes or short-cuts the church-planting process. Seasons cannot be rushed: prepare the soil, sow the seed (evangelization), tend the seed and soil – cultivation and watering (patient discipleship), reap a harvest (conversions), gather the seed into the barn (ground them into the church), prepare the seed for planting, and repeat the entire process. Seek first fruits, not another's. When individuals visit your church from another nearby apostolic church, contact their pastor. Ask him about their background story, even if he has granted permission for a transfer. Make sure church discipline is not an issue or that the people are not running from problems. If they have visited without the blessing or impetus of the pastor, do not accept their return visits.

Wait on God, who, as a Missionary, will build your church-planting team! He knows the hearts He has prepared to team with you in His mission and is simultaneously calling complimentary ministries together. If you feel God is directing you to invite someone/couple from another church to join your church-planting team, the first (and possibly the ONLY) person you should contact is their pastor. Ask their pastor for permission to speak to the potential team member(s). If their pastor does not grant you permission the case is closed, and the potential person should never even know they were a potential!

Tim Hein, offers important advice¹⁷:

1. Don't take or cherry pick key people from your previous church! Sometimes it's an explicit encouragement to leave, whilst other times it's an implicit hint. Either way, without the blessing or impetus of the pastor/congregation, it is unethical! It reflects a leadership posture of wedding people to oneself, rather than to the kingdom, and is a subversion of the church community. It has nothing to do the mission of Jesus, and more to do with territory, ambition, and ego. The best possible scenario is for a Mother Church to bless and send you and your team.

¹⁷ Adapted from <https://timhein.com.au/2016/04/12/five-ethical-principles-for-putting-together-a-church-planting-team/>.

2. It is true that current churches can feel nervous about the potential loss of a key leader to a new, exciting project. There are ethical questions for them, too. But the primary ethical check is with the posture of the church planter – be determined to build a team through a process whereby other churches cheer you on in a spirit of collaboration and unity. Subversively wooing strong Christians from other churches to your project does not help the mission of God. If you are going to grow, it can't be because others are diminished.

The following three forms of communication will promote trust with the pastor when requesting to speak to potential team members:

1. Scheduled an in-person meeting
2. Electronic communication: phone calls, texts, and e-mails
3. Written communication

Work with pastor(s) to approve:

1. How to reach out to potential core team members
2. Time expectation of potential team members
3. Financial expectation of potential team members
4. Term/permanent service of potential team members

If we are serious about building a gospel-centered, healthy community to reach our culture in the long term, we will do well to start on a pure and ethical foundation.

Eleven Ethical Guidelines for Church Planters¹⁸:

1. Since the global need for the gospel is so great, *unless God reveals otherwise*, we will begin our ministry among people with the greatest need *and* with a high level of receptivity to the gospel.
2. Since the world consists of four billion unbelievers, with two billion who have never heard the gospel, our strategy will involve the use of highly reproducible church planting methods.
3. Since biblical church planting is evangelism that results in new churches, we will not prioritize transfer growth over conversion growth by designing ministries that will primarily attract believers.
4. Since unity among churches in a geographical area is a powerful witness to the gospel, we will be concerned with other [apostolic] evangelical pastors laboring in the same area as our team and will take the initiative to meet with them to share our calling, vision, and ethic.
5. Since we desire to respect other [Apostolic] evangelical pastors in the area, and desire sanctification in the lives of any transfers from local churches, we will have a systematic plan to respond to the transfers who want to become part of the new church.
6. Since our calling to this ministry, people, and location is from God and not based on money, we will not end our church planting ministry in this area simply if our financial

¹⁸ <http://www.jdpayne.org/2010/02/01/ethical-guidelines-for-church-planters/>. Permission granted. J.D. Payne's book, *Apostolic Church Planting*, contains a chapter on these guidelines: https://www.amazon.com/Apostolic-Church-Planting-Birthing-Believers/dp/0830841245/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=

support ends, but rather will make appropriate plans for the future of our personal finances.

7. Since the biblical model for church planting is a team approach, and many liabilities come when working as a solo church planter, a team will be developed before the work begins.
8. Since one of the most critical issues in missionary circles is that of the stress on the family, we will not neglect our families for the sake of church planting and will begin our work with a strategy for nurturing our family life while serving as church planters.
9. Since we are Kingdom Citizens, we will not neglect our daily devotion time with the Lord by allowing ourselves to be distracted by the numerous tasks to be accomplished in the ministry.
10. Since the task of missionary work involves effective communication, we will work diligently toward contextualization rather than bringing our preferred church traditions to the people.
11. Since integrity and accuracy are important when reporting statistics related to our missionary labors, we will strive to report only those numbers and descriptive details which are truly reflective of what the Holy Spirit is doing in our context.

Core Team Culture Training

Culture, like gravity, is invisible but determinative. You can't see it, but it affects everything. You can't touch it, but you definitely *feel* it. It is why people stay (come back) or leave. Leadership is responsible for intentional culture creation. "The strongest force in an organization is not vision or strategy – it is the culture which holds all the other components."¹⁹ Simply put, culture is the tangible experience that people have when they first encounter your church: all that they see, hear, smell, and feel. A healthy church culture possesses congruence and consistency between what the church says is important to her and what others know *really is* important to her. One's practice must align with one's philosophy and theology. It determines the long-term success of your Launch.

Your core team must unite on the establishment and practice of a common culture, built upon vision, mission, and values: "the core principles and ideals upon which an entire community exists and protect and rely upon for existence and harmonious relationship."²⁰ Therefore, the core team must:

1. Remain true to the mission (Luke 19:10)
2. Realize trust is critical. (Ephesians 4:1–13)
3. Empower team members. (Matthew 10:1–16)
4. Offer encouragement and support. (Joshua 1:9, Mark 11:24, Luke 6:31)
5. Acknowledge and reward/celebrate sacrifice. (Colossians 3:23–24)
6. Be accountable. (Matthew 25:14–30)

Paul's Systematic Church Planting Model

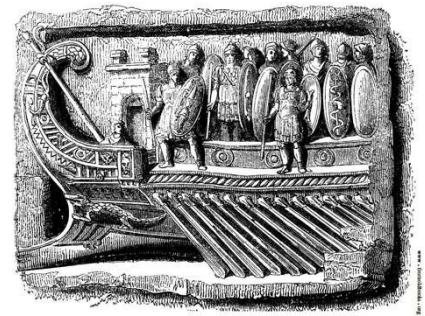
Paul and his teams utilized a systematic model (methods) to establish a network of churches:

¹⁹ www.careynieuwhof.com, *Guide on How to Create an Amazing Church Culture*.

²⁰ <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/cultural-values/40861>

1. Paul's primary focus was to **evangelize a community** by infiltrating it with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ.²¹ Preaching/teaching the saving gospel results in conversions.
2. **Establish a church** by gathering newly converted believers into a community.
3. **Equip the saints** with a common doctrine and missional culture (DNA).
4. **Empower**, by appointment, **a local leadership team** with their own local pastor: each local assembly self-governs (that's what churches do by biblical definition). Each new local assembly naturally, in time due to the nature of their DNA, replicates itself by sending a representative team to evangelize the next town or people group, gather the new believers into a community, teach and equip (found), appoint local leaders, who, through continued equipping, could send a representative team to the next town...

5. **Encourage** and **exhort** through ongoing administrative oversight via communication, visits, and accountability by Paul or a designated team member(s). Paul defines his oversight: "This is how one should regard us, as **servants** of Christ and **stewards** of the mysteries of God ... I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. I urge you, then, be imitators of me. That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church ... For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a **stewardship** ... I have made myself a **servant** to all." (1 Corinthians 4:1, 15-17; 9:17,19 ESV, emphasis added). Paul dispenses exhortation received from God to those he spiritually fathered. He teaches (emphasizes) servant leadership by modeling it. Note *Strong's* definitions of the four titles Paul gives of himself and his designees:



- a. Servants [*uperethj*: an under-oarsman²²] of Christ. Under-oarsmen: the epitome of teamwork! "The Roman war galleys were common sights to the Corinthians. These war galleys were propelled mainly by rowing. Everyone knew that the lowest deck of the galley was filled with two long rows of benches where dozens of oarsmen, usually slaves, sat chained to the ship and to each other."²³
- b. Stewards [*oikonomoj*: the manager of household or of household affairs²⁴] of the mysteries of God
- c. Stewardship [*oikonomia*: administration (of a household or estate)²⁵]
- d. Stewarts [*doulow*: to make a slave of, reduce to bondage; metaph. give myself wholly to one's needs and service, make myself a bondman²⁶] unto all. "I am merely a steward—a slave doing his duty."²⁷

²¹ See Romans 1:1, 15-17; 15:14-21; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

²² <http://www.godrules.net/library/strongs2b/gre5257.htm>

²³ <http://itsaboutjesus.weebly.com/its-about-jesus/we-are-just-under-rowers>

²⁴ <http://www.godrules.net/library/strongs2b/gre3623.htm>

²⁵ <http://www.godrules.net/library/strongs2b/gre3622.htm>

²⁶ <http://www.godrules.net/library/strongs2b/gre1402.htm>

²⁷ Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, https://biblehub.com/commentaries/1_corinthians/9-17.htm