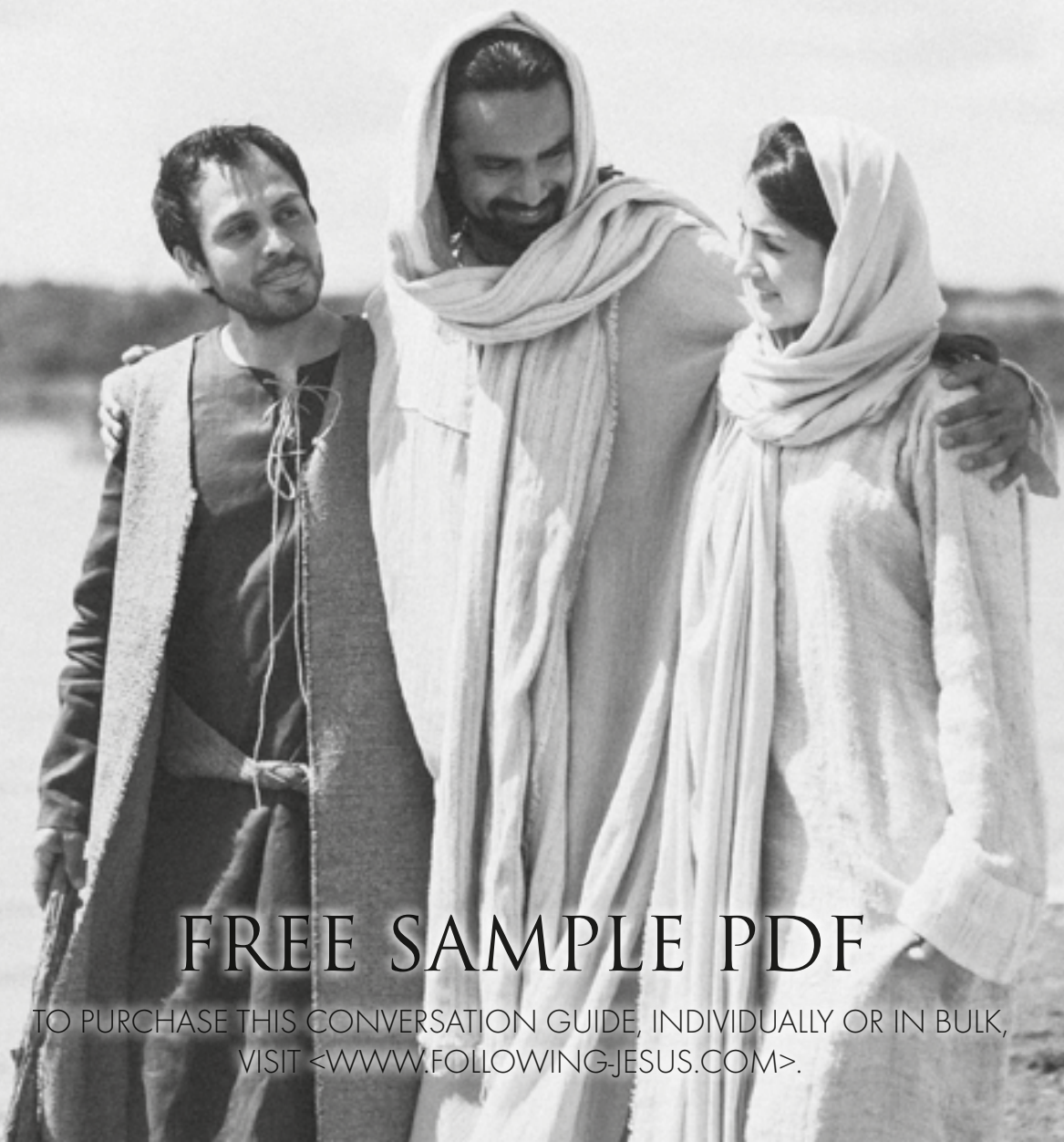


PLANTING CHURCHES

CONVERSATION GUIDE 2

FROM GROUPS TO PLANTS TO ORGANISED CHURCHES

PETER ROENNFELDT



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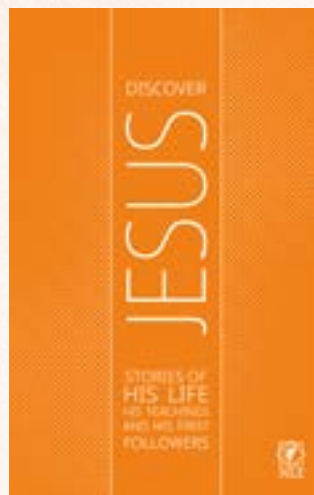
RESOURCES

FOR FACILITATORS AND PARTICIPANTS

Facilitators: When planning to equip teams to make disciples, plant new churches and cultivate movements, ensure you have the following resources for each participant. For each phase of equipping, each participant will need the Conversation Guide, copies of each book, together with a good supply of *Discovery Bible Reading* bookmarks and *Discover Jesus*—a compilation of the New Testament books of Mark, John and Acts—to share with neighbours and friends.

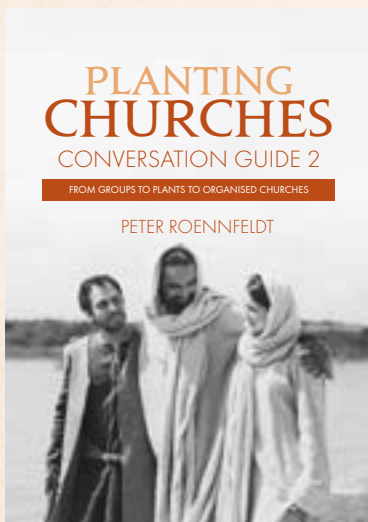


Bookmarks for *Discovery Bible Reading*



A compilation of Mark, John and Acts to share with friends

Conversation Guide 2—Planting Churches



Planting Churches Guide—for discussion



Walk through Acts—our manual for church-planting.



Explore how to be Spirit baptised and filled.

WELCOME



#SES1-VIDEO1

Jesus began His ministry making disciples. Then, on the evening of His resurrection, He said: "*As the Father has sent me, I am sending you*" (John 20:21). Before He ascended, He commanded: "*Go and make disciples of all nations*" (Matthew 28:19). This is our commission.

The starting point for church planting is disciple-making—making new disciples who multiply.

A new church plant is a gathering of new disciples.

- The gospels tell of Jesus' multiplying disciple-makers. By His life, teaching and commission, He modelled disciple-making. He is our example, and the gospels our manual for this task.
- Acts tells of the early believers following Jesus—and then gathering new disciples into multiplying church-planting churches. Acts is our manual for planting churches.

We have prepared three conversation guides to explore these themes:

1. **MULTIPLYING DISCIPLES**—with the book *Following Jesus*.
2. **CHURCH PLANTING**—with the book *Following the Spirit*.
3. **CULTIVATING MOVEMENTS**—with the book *Following the Apostles' Vision*.

In this conversation guide, we walk through the Book of Acts—to identify key steps in planting and forming new churches.

Videos available

This Guide is set out for 12 sessions of 1 to 1.5 hours each, with accompanying videos for use by facilitators for equipping, discussion and application with any number of groups or teams.

You can work through this Conversation Guide with a group of friends at your own pace, or you can be guided by the free videos from <www.following-jesus.com>. There are videos for each of the 12 Sessions in this Guide. Once you have them downloaded, start Session 1—with your Bible and Conversation Guide open. The videos will lead you through the Guide, giving opportunities to pause for discussion of key ideas. For each session, there will be two, three or four video segments—each giving adequate time for discussion of key concepts.

You will find this equipping to be practical and inspiring. You will be exploring Jesus' idea of church, and the early apostles and believers' application of His teachings to planting a network or movement of multiplying churches—as well as developing and implementing plans to plant new communities of faith.


peter@newchurchlife.com

PLANTING CHURCHES CONVERSATION GUIDE

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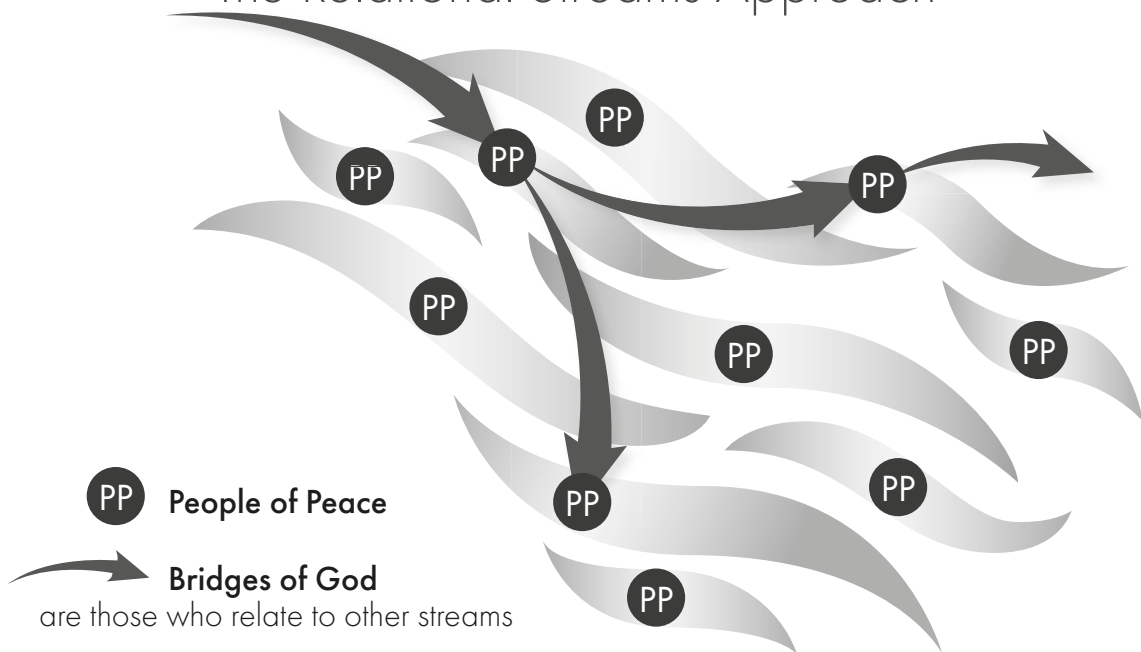
SESSION 1

THE GREAT COMMISSION —END VISION

Read Matthew 28:16–20 using *Discovery Bible Reading*:

- One person will read Matthew 28:16–20—then another will read the same verses.
- Then one will share the story in their own words, with the others helping.

The Relational Streams Approach



APPLICATION

VISION: What is God's vision for disciple-making?

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MISSION: Why will your church plant exist?

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#SES1-VIDEO2

Why plant churches?

1. What are some reasons why new church plants are needed?

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2. Discuss and prioritise the following reasons for planting new churches:

- To reach new people.
- To extend God's kingdom.
- To put disciple-making back on our agenda.
- To equip new leaders.
- To build a fresh relationship with God—for all are missionaries (Acts 1:8).
- To ensure established churches experience new life (Acts 8–10, 14–15).
- To put us in tune with God's missionary heart—at work outside the church.
- To take us to where the Spirit is working outside the church (Acts 10–11, 16:9, 17).
- To pass on faith and church to next generations (Acts 13:1–4).
 - It is the way for next generations to:
 - find a new relationship with Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
 - take ownership of the church.
 - cultivate the next generation of believers.
- To compel the church to engage with the culture and the future of church (Acts 17).
- To put us in touch with our New Testament and faith heritage.
 - It reminds us of our origins as a planting movement.

3. Why did movement pioneers emphasise that new believers “be organised into churches”—rather than just added to existing churches (Ellen G White, Testimonies for the Church, vol 7, pages 19–20)?

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4. Discuss: “We must do more than we have done to reach the people of our cities. We are not to erect large buildings in the cities, but over and over again the light has been given me that *we should establish in all our cities small plants which shall be centres of influence*” (Ellen G White, Testimonies for the Church, vol 7, pages 115). What conclusions do you come to?

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A theological frame —church planting flows from God’s heart

1. **God’s triune being and activity: John 17:21.**
 - God is the missionary. Mission flows from God’s heart and activity (see John 3:16).
 - God became ‘flesh and blood’ to save us. We call this His incarnation (see John 1:14).
2. **God gave Himself in sacrifice for us: Philippians 2:1 – 11.**
3. **God’s kingdom vision: Luke 4:18,19.**
 - Growing God’s kingdom in people’s lives is an imperative for established and new churches.
4. **God’s temple or body is the church: Ephesians 2:19–22.**
 - How are the APEPT gifts—apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher—to be used to equip the church? (Ephesians 4:11–13)
 - How many believers in a church of 20 people might have these equipping gifts? (Ephesians 4:11)
5. **Oneness in Christ—all are to minister: 1 Peter 2:1 – 10; Galatians 3:26–29.**
 - What does a "royal priest" do? What does this teach about the nature of church?
 - How do you involve every person as a "royal priest"? What roles of service are for Jews or slaves only—or for males or females only?
6. **The priestly duty of reaching all: Romans 15:14–33**

APPLICATION

In what way is incarnation to shape our engagement with our communities?

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How will God’s cruciform nature and sacrifice shape our church plants?

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How will these theological insights inspire and shape our church plant?

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#SES2-VIDEO1

SESSION 2

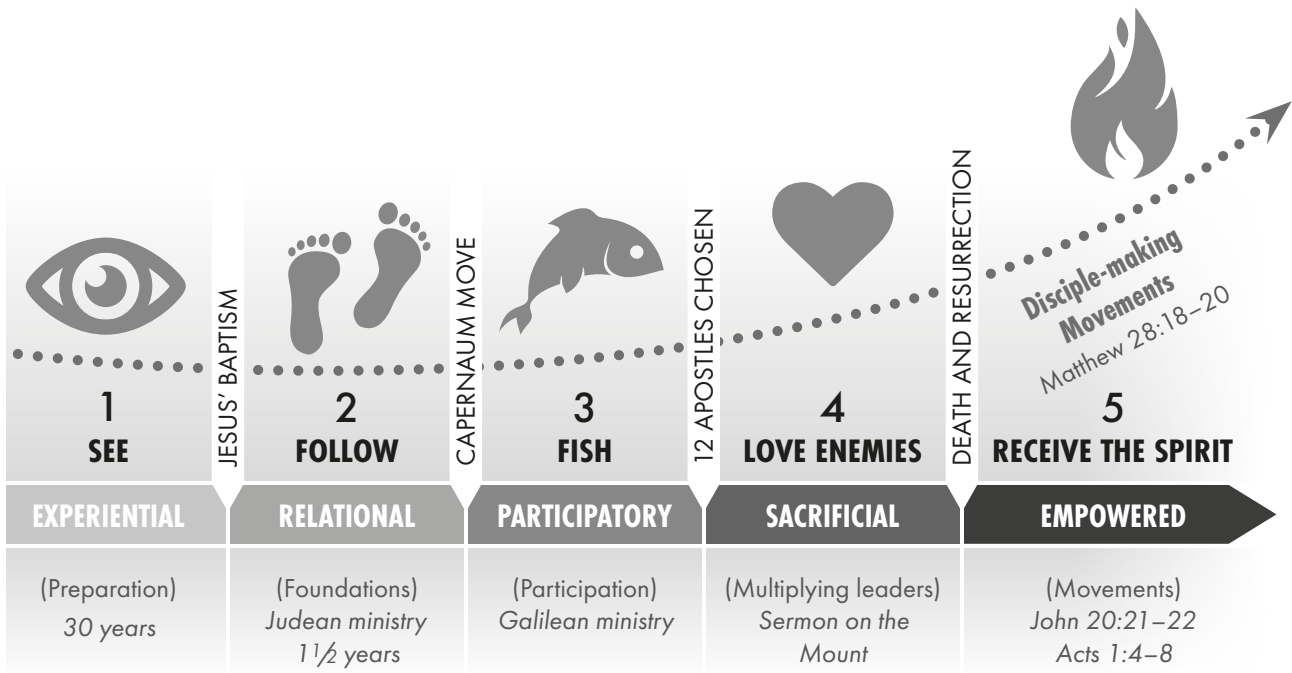
ESSENTIAL FRAMES

Jesus' method—movement-builder: John 20:19-23

FIVE INVITATIONS

- Preparation phase—**Come and See** (John 1:35-39)
- Foundations phase—**Follow Me** (John 1:43)
- Participation-training—**Fish with Me** (Matthew 4:18-20)
- Multiplying leaders—**Love your enemies/sacrifice with Me** (Matthew 5:43-45; 16:24)
- Movements phase—**Receive the Spirit** (John 20:21, 22)

Review how Jesus used these five invitations to cultivate His kingdom movement:



APPLICATION

What process will your planting team follow to cultivate a movement, however small?

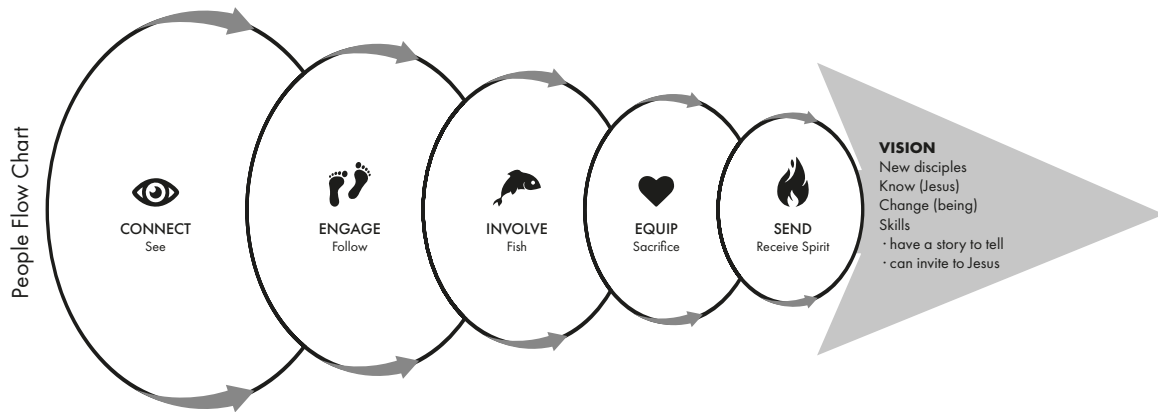
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Jesus' method—disciple-making

Review how Jesus used these five invitations to make individual disciples (John 4:1–42):



APPLICATION

Identify those your team members are already connecting with, for each of the five invitations:

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What process will your planting team follow to cultivate many ready for each invitation?

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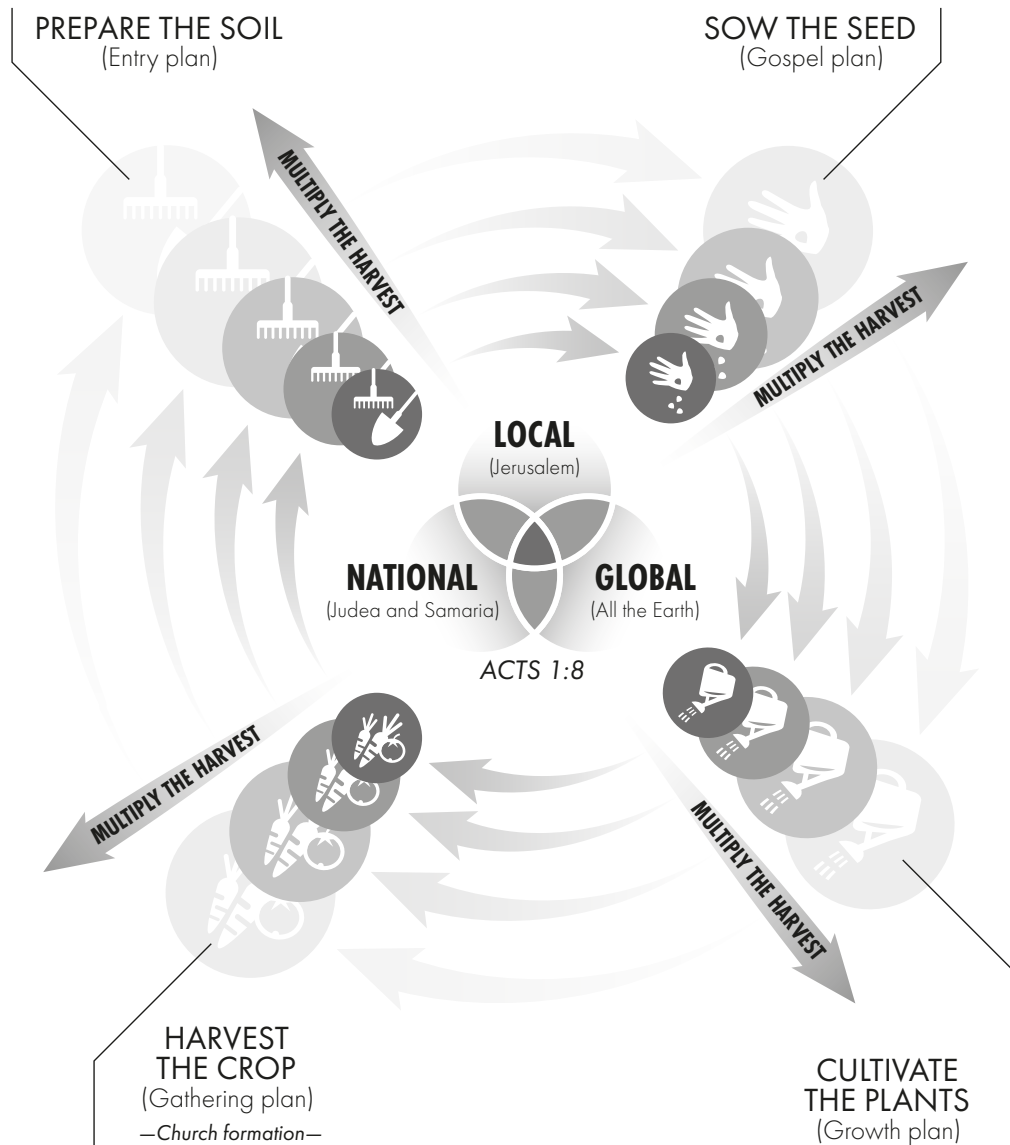
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#SES2-VIDEO3

Jesus’ harvest parable and teaching (Mark 4:26-29)

Jesus shared harvest parables to reveal “the secret of the kingdom of God” (Mark 4:11, 26). We use the parable of *four types of soils*—with the “good soil” (prepared, cultivated and full of manure) producing a “multiplying” crop (Mark 4:3-20). We also use the *harvest model* (Mark 4:26-29)—sometimes referred to as the *four fields*.¹ It is one field, but the field changes.

Discuss this agricultural and disciple-making model.



APPLICATION

Where in the harvest model is church planting happening—and multiplying?

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¹ Nathan and Kari Shank, *Reproducing Churches Using Simple Tools*, 2007; Peter Roennfeldt, *Following Jesus: Disciple-Making and Movement-Building*, Signs Publishing, 2017, page 134.

Jesus' teaching—disciple-making: Luke 10:1–24

Read Luke 10:1–9 using *Discovery Bible Reading*:

Jesus had many disciples (John 3:22; 4:1, 2). When He called the Twelve to be apostles, He had a “crowd of disciples” (Luke 6:12–19). Luke 10 tells of Him calling and training many more. This was five to six months before His crucifixion. Look carefully at how He trained these disciples to make new disciples.



An overlay of Jesus' teaching on entering new fields (Luke 10:1–24) with His harvest model (Mark 4:26–29) reveals five activities for multiplying disciples and planting churches. What did Jesus outline for each step or each area of activity?

DISCIPLE-MAKING

1. Prepare (empty field):

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2. Sow:

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3. Cultivate (growing “all by itself”):

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CHURCH-PLANTING

4. Harvest (Gather):

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5. Multiply:

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Disciple-making precedes church-planting:

- What two things can all new disciples do?

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- What are the implications if a new church plant is a gathering of new disciples?

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#SES3-VIDEO1

SESSION 3

JESUS' IDEA OF CHURCH

When Jesus spoke of church He did not speak of buildings or institutions. The word church (*ekklesia*) means gathering—a gathering of disciples. Jesus used the word “church” on two occasions. Use the *Discovery Bible Reading* process to explore these:

1. What did Jesus say about church?

Matthew 16:13-21

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Matthew 18:15-20

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APPLICATION

Who is the Rock on which the church is founded?

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Who is the church?

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What are the *keys of the kingdom* given to disciples?

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How will each person in your church plant know how to use the keys?

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What are the implications of the basic unit of church being *two or three gathered in Jesus' name*?

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2. What is the purpose of church—or its reason for being?

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APPLICATION

How can these purposes be cultivated in a new church plant?

- **Matthew 22:36–40:** The great commandments

Worship:

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Service:

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- **Matthew 28:16–20:** The great commission

Disciple-making:

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Fellowship and community:

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Obedient discipleship:

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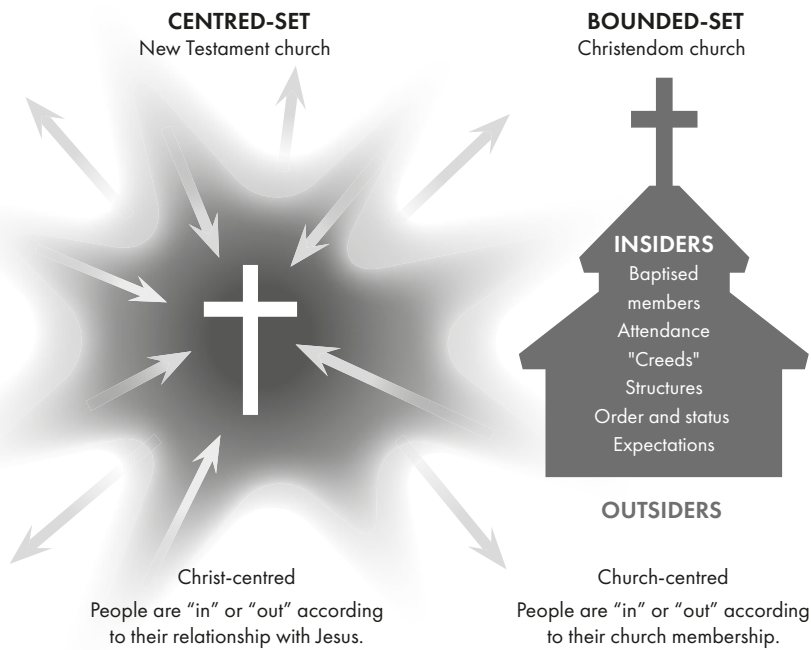
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#SES3-VIDEO3

Centred-set faith and church

Not one of the churches that we read of in the New Testament had a church building. The growth and vitality of those churches took place without a single church building—and in the midst of terrible opposition. There were no church buildings until Constantine’s time in the fourth century. Jesus’ idea was *centred-set* faith and church, but with the introduction of buildings and institutions, the church quickly became *bounded-set*—as illustrated here:



APPLICATION

How is the nature of church changed by whether it is *centred-set* or *bounded-set*?

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While planting within bounded-set systems, what could a church planting team do to foster centred-set faith—to fulfil its purpose of obeying the great commandments and commission?

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SESSION 4

THE FIRST CHURCH PLANTS

The first church plants were in Jerusalem. In the first chapters of Acts, we are given a view of what those churches looked like—providing many valuable insights for us as church planters.

The life, vitality and dynamic growth of the early church:
Acts 1–6

CALVARY AND RESURRECTION (ACTS 1:1–8)

1. The message for early believers:

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2. Their source of power:

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3. Jesus' vision for His people:

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PENTECOST AND PRESENCE (ACTS 1:9–2:4)

Read **Acts 2:42–47** using *Discovery Bible Reading*:

1. With the Spirit's presence, what were the features of the church?

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2. List the qualities that you want to foster in your church plant:

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#SES4-VIDEO3

COPING WITH OPPOSITION (ACTS 4:1–4, 32–37)

Despite growing opposition from authorities—and no longer having access to temple support—in a short time, what did the church look like in Jerusalem?

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Transitional tipping points for church planters: Acts 7–11

With opposition came opportunities to gain a fuller understanding of God’s plan for church.

STEPHEN’S SPEECH AND DEATH (ACTS 7:1–8:3)

What is the significance of Stephen’s speech for church planters?

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SCATTERED BY PERSECUTION (ACTS 8:1–4)

When scattered by persecution, what did the believers do?

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APPLICATION

Using *Discovery Bible Reading*, explore the following four accounts and identify the major paradigm shifts in each. What shifts in thinking were essential for God's church-planting movement to impact the world at that time—and what do these suggest for us as church-planters today?

- **Acts 8:4–25:** The Samaritans

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- **Acts 8:26–40:** The Ethiopian eunuch

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- **Acts 9:1–32:** Saul

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- **Acts 9:32–11:18:** Peter and Cornelius

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#SES5-VIDEO1

SESSION 5

ANTIOCH—A PLANTING CASE STUDY

The church in Antioch was the first New Testament multicultural church plant—and the *hub* from which Paul's three major missionary journeys were conducted.

A MULTICULTURAL CHURCH (ACTS 11:19-30)

Using *Discovery Bible Reading*, read Acts 11:19–30, and examine this case study to identify key insights for your church-planting.

1. Who planted the church in Antioch—and how?

.....
.....
.....

2. What do you discover about church planting from this case study?

- Teams:
-
- Foundations:
-
- Multiculturalism:
-
- Equipping:
-
- Values:
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3. Why do you think Antioch became the centre of Paul's missionary journeys?

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A SENDING CHURCH (ACTS 13:1–6)

Still known as Saul at that time, Paul had already spent time in Cilicia—his home area with his *ethne* or relational connections. Now they would go to Cyprus, the home island of Barnabas and John Mark (see Acts 4:36, 37).

FOR MULTIPLICATION—ETHNE MAPPING AND PRAYER

APPLICATION

Use this *ethné* map to trace the family connections of the team leaving Antioch—and then have each planting team member identify their *ethné* map as a focus for prayer:



With your *ethné* maps before you, spend 10 minutes praying for the people and places they connect you with:

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#SES6-VIDEO 1

SESSION 6

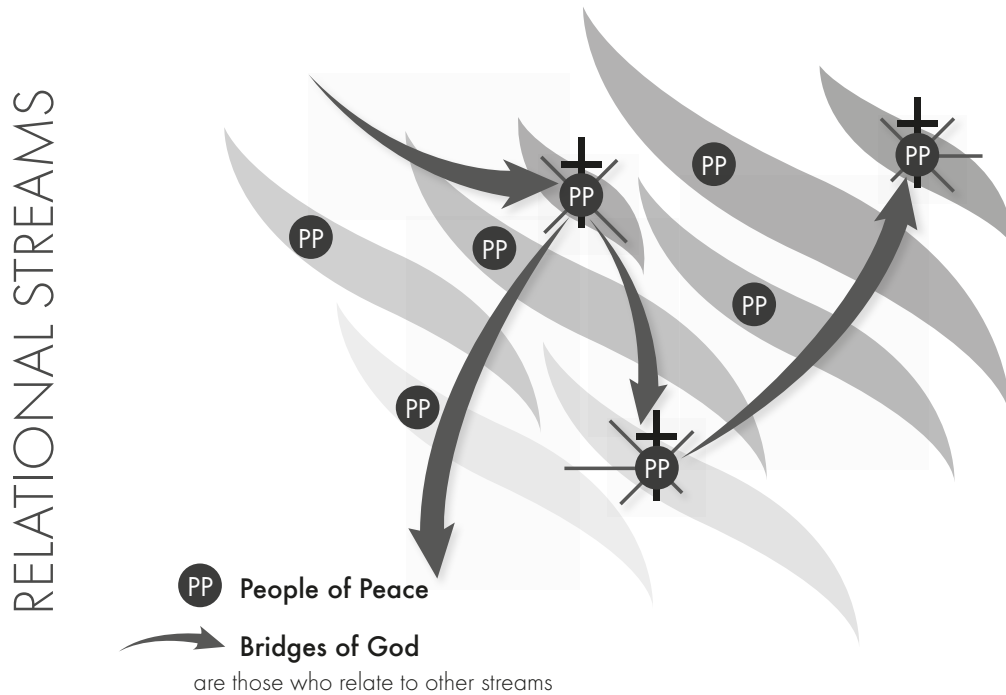
PAUL'S CHURCH-PLANTING

Paul modelled his life and ministry on that of his Lord. Luke's report in Acts, on the apostles' journeys, feature some of the key principles and actions he took to plant multiplying churches.

Following relational streams (*ethnē*)

JOURNEY 1 (ACTS 13:1–14:28)

Jesus taught this by His example and in His great commission (Matthew 28:16–20).



What are the strengths of Jesus' *relational streams* approach when compared with the 19th- and 20th-century *mission station* model? (See diagram on the next page.)

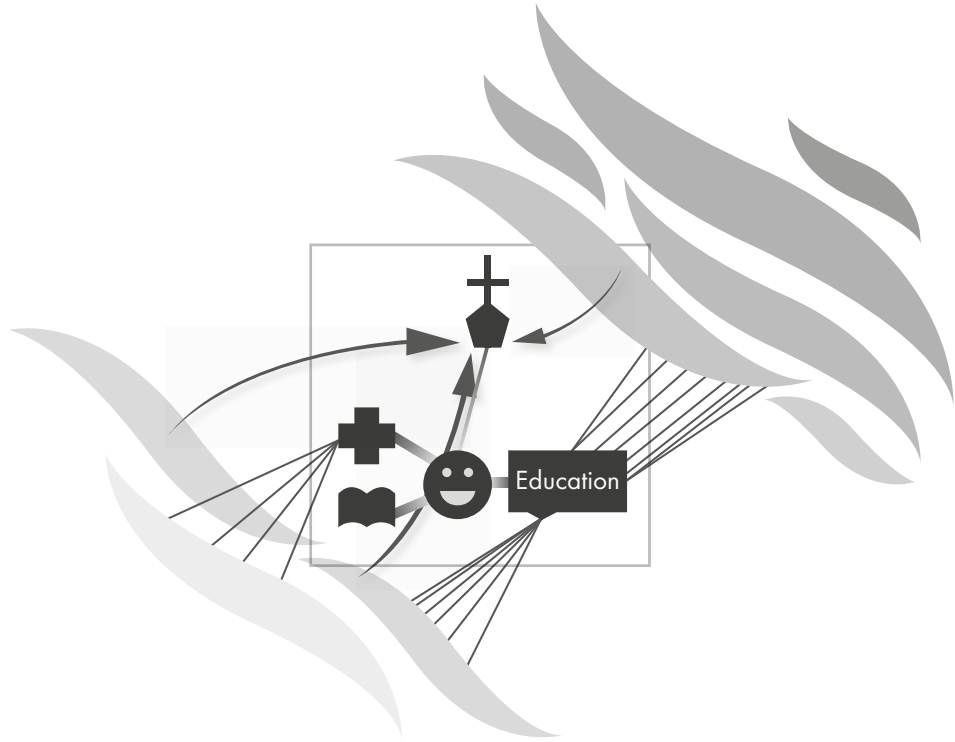
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MISSION STATION



APPLICATION

Whose *relational streams* did Paul and Barnabas follow?

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What *relational streams* do your team have that need to be followed?

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Who did Paul find as *persons of peace*?

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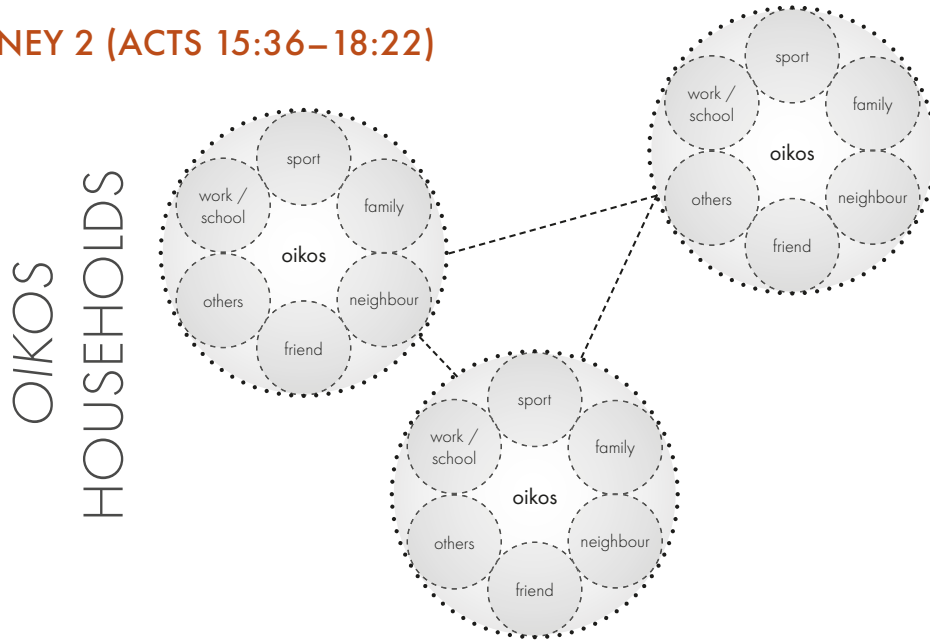
Who might be key people you know—welcoming and receptive, with a reputation and influence?

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#SES6-VIDEO2

Planting in households (oikos)

JOURNEY 2 (ACTS 15:36–18:22)



APPLICATION

How did Paul use households to multiply churches?

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How did involving the natural household leaders multiply leaders and disciples?

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How will you involve natural household leaders?

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How will the idea of *households of faith* inform your church-planting model?

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APPLICATION

Use this *oikos* map to trace the possible family connections of Lydia or the jailer—and then, each draw their own *oikos* maps:



With your *oikos* maps before you, spend 10 minutes praying for those on your maps.



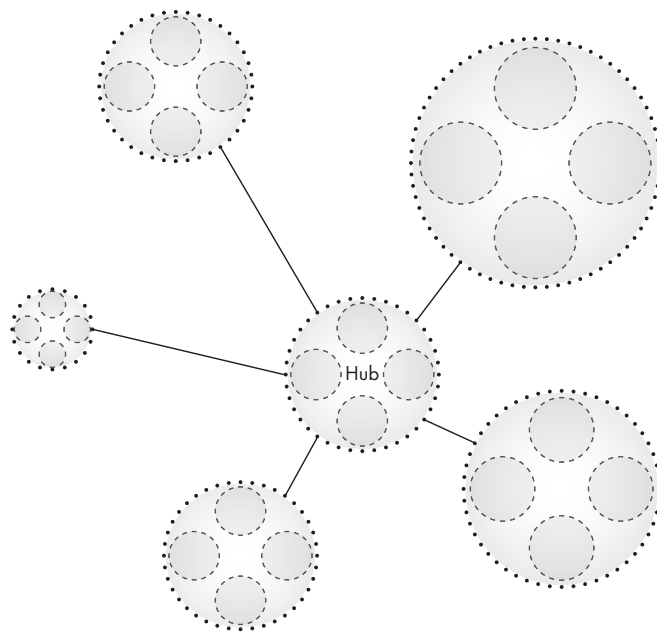
#SES6-VIDEO3

Planting *hub* churches

JOURNEY 3 (ACTS 18:23–21:16)

Jesus worked the districts from home *hubs* in Bethany and Capernaum. Believers were scattered from the Jerusalem *hub* to plant in Antioch, and Paul's journeys were supported by the Antioch *hub*. Luke's account of Paul's third journey focuses on the Ephesus church plant as a *hub*.

HUBS MULTIPLYING
CHURCHES



What was the impact of the Ephesus church-planting *hub*? (Acts 19:1–20)

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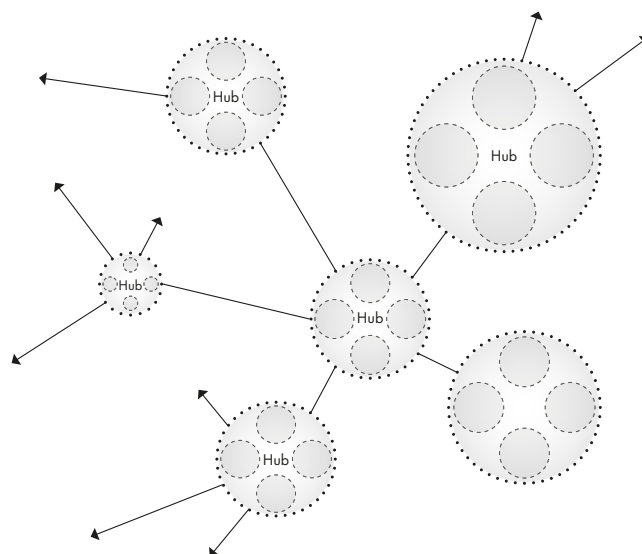
What churches were planted from the Ephesus hub?

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▶ #SES6-VIDEO4

Each plant a hub—equipping and releasing

HUB EQUIPPING
CHURCHES



The vision is that each new church be planted as another hub, equipping and releasing:

APPLICATION

What will you do to ensure your plant is a planting *hub*?

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Where would you find the church planting teams to equip?

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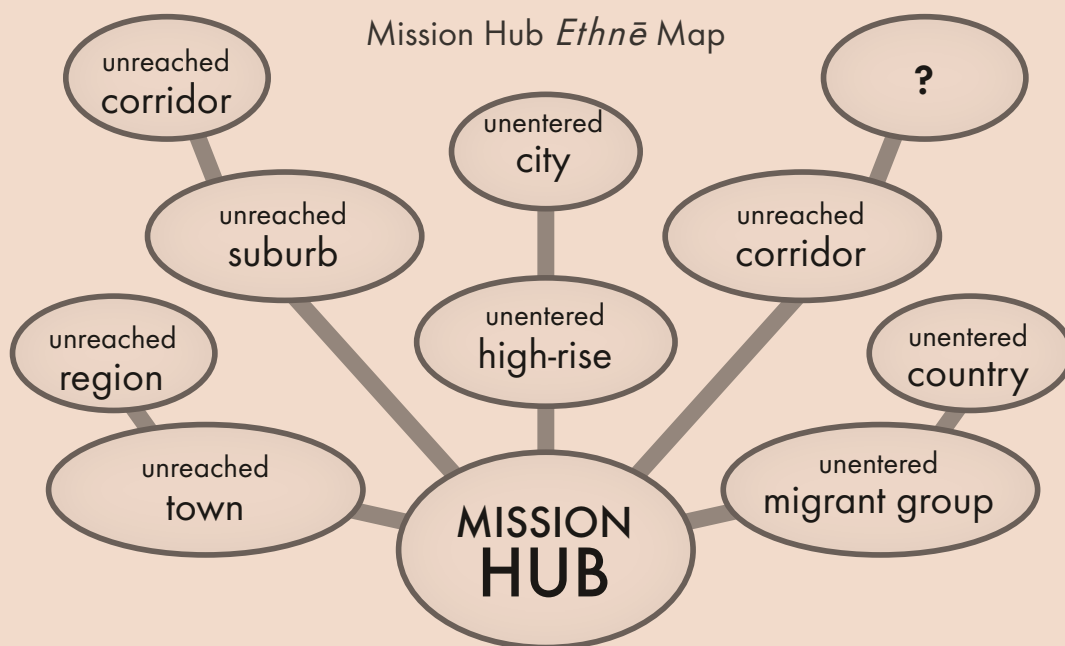
When will this be done?

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Review your *ethné* map to track *relational connections* into unreached places. Use your *ethné* map to envisage your plant as a church-planting *hub*:



#SES7-VIDEO1

SESSION 7

PLANNING FOR PLANTING A CHURCH (1)

Paul modelled his life and ministry on that of his Lord. Luke’s report in Acts, on the apostle’s journeys, feature some of the key principles and actions he took to plant multiplying churches.



1. PREPARE

In equipping disciple-makers in Luke 10, Jesus focused on four important areas:

1. TEAMS

Find team members in the Bible classes and youth groups of existing churches that have restructured according to where they live—where they are now leading Discovery Bible Reading groups and making disciples.

Identify people of peace—like the Samaritan woman or healed demon-possessed man of Gadara—who are now sharing faith within their networks.

How many are needed for a core team?
.....
.....

- What qualities are needed in the team?
• They need to be disciple-makers.
• They walk with Jesus and experience His Spirit.
• They bring to the team a mix of giftedness, identified by their SHAPE—Spiritual giftedness, Heart passions, Abilities, Personalities and Experiences (good and bad).

Who are your core team members? What is each person’s SHAPE?
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#SES7-VIDEO2

2. PLACES

Where are your relational streams—family, friends and communities?

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Who are the disenfranchised, who often start movements?

- Who do the Samaritans represent today?
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.....
• Who does the Ethiopian eunuch represent today?
.....
.....
• Who is a Saul in your community today?
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#SES7-VIDEO3

- Who does Cornelius and his household represent today?

.....

Where do you see the Spirit already at work?

- Fan every flame. All cultures of the world now live next door (see Acts 1:4–8).
- List where new groups are needed—and when they might start:

.....

To where have you been scattered during the pandemic? Is that where God wants you to plant new, multiplying *households of faith*?

.....

3. PRAYER

How will your team follow Jesus' instruction to pray for more harvesters?

.....

4. CONNECTING

Who have the team members identified as *people of peace*?

.....



#SES7-VIDEO4

APPLICATION

BIBLICAL PURPOSE—which verse or verses describe the vision of your church plant?

.....

VISION—what do you believe is God's end-vision for your church plant?

.....

MISSION—how would you describe God's mission for this plant?

.....

WORLDVIEW: Values and attitudes

List essential, distinctive and realistic values that will govern how your new church plant will relate within and with the community—with key actions that will flow from each:

We value:	Actions:
1. The priesthood of all believers.	1. Our leaders will include women and youth.
2. Community.	2. We welcome all—even if different.
3. <i>Discovery Bible Reading</i> .	3. We will do it at least once each week.
4. Safe places.	4. Our gatherings will be safe places for women and children.
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SESSION 8

PLANNING FOR PLANTING A CHURCH (2)

In the previous session, we focused on **preparing** to plant, while in this we give more attention to **sowing** gospel seed and **cultivating** the growth of disciples.



2. SOW

EATING-HEALING-SHARING (LUKE 10:8, 9)

List team members who regularly practice Jesus' three steps to connect:

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.....
.....

List where *Discovery Bible Reading* groups have formed:

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How many more harvesters are stepping up in response to prayer? (Luke 10:2)

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How will more people of peace be found? (Luke 10:5-9)

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#SES8-VIDEO2



3. CULTIVATE

1. MULTIPLY DISCOVERY BIBLE READING GROUPS—for growth and equipping

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2. CULTIVATE NATURAL LEADERS

What was the role of people of peace in Paul's church-planting—and who mentored them?

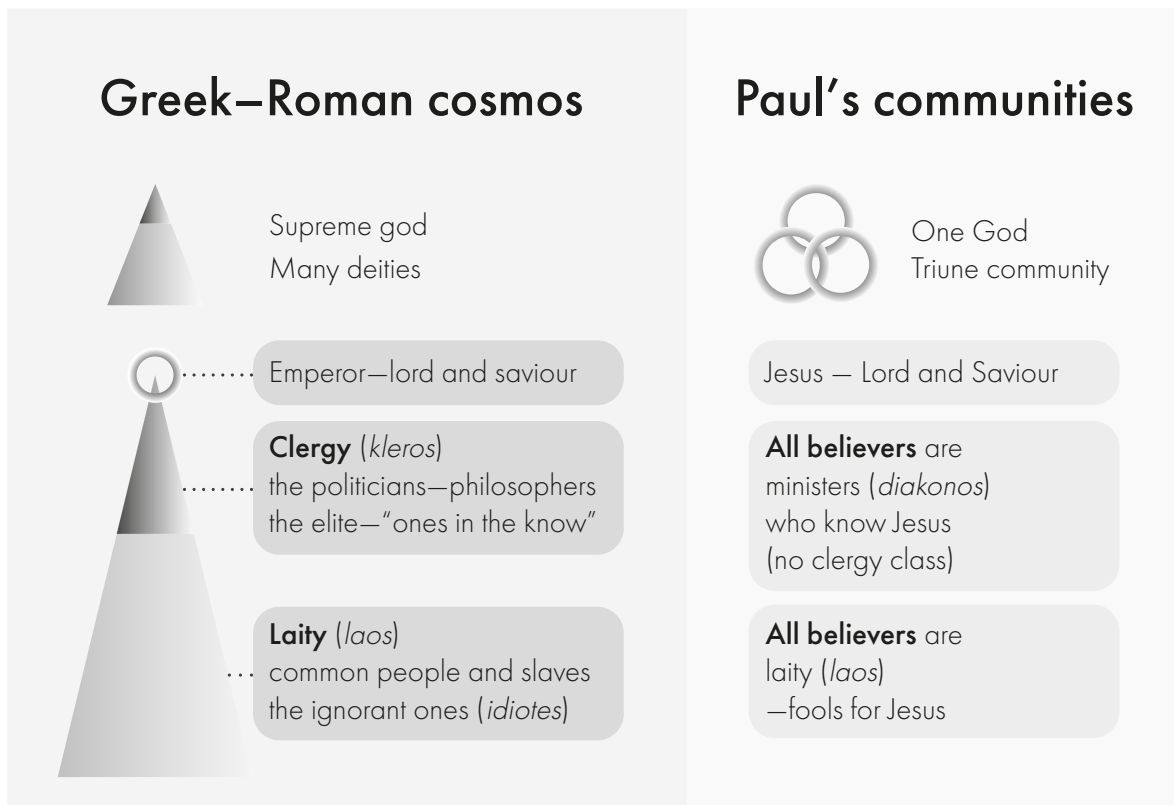
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3. CULTIVATE FUNCTIONAL AND SACRIFICIAL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

What difference do you see between the hierarchical Greek-Roman models and Paul's sacrificial model of leadership?



4. KNOW THE BELIEFS THAT WILL DEFINE YOUR CHURCH

Insights from the flow of Revelation 14:6–13:

					
STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5	STAGE 6
Relate to the context of people (to every nation)	Tell the story of Jesus (everlasting gospel)	Share how to practise Christian living (fear God and worship)	Explore Adventist doctrines (Creator, Sabbath, judgment)	Explore major prophetic themes (prophetic symbols in Daniel and Revelation)	Multiply disciples

APPLICATION

What key beliefs will define your church plant?

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Who are the people in your community? What beliefs will be important to reach them?

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In what positive ways could God’s special message (Revelation 14:6–13) to prepare people for Jesus’ return (Revelation 14:14–20) define church?

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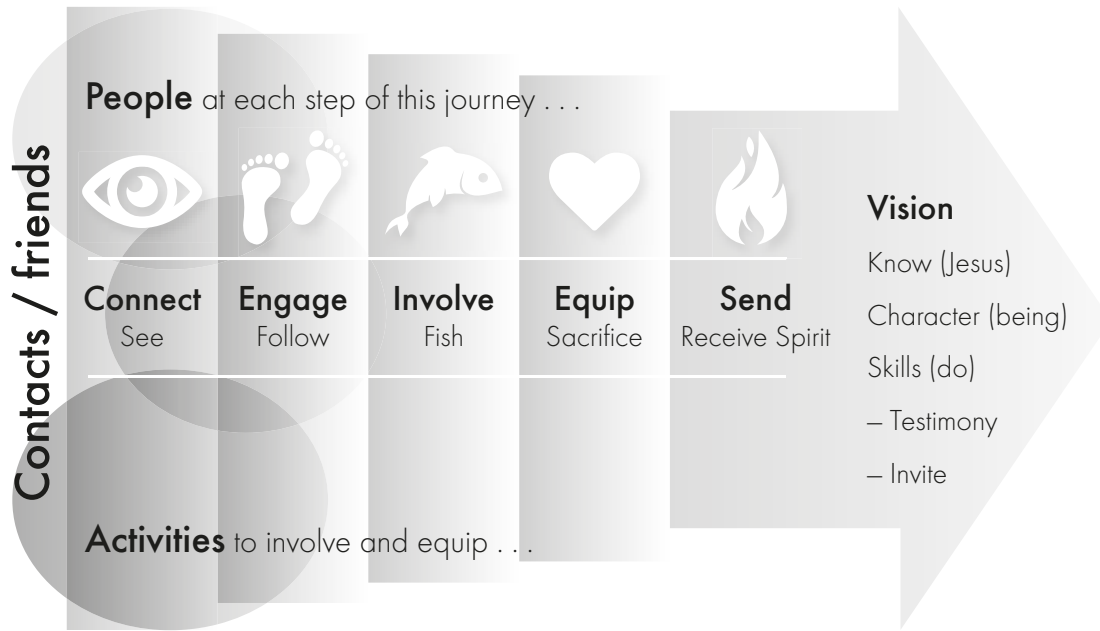
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#SES8-VIDEO4

5. FOLLOW A CLEAR DISCIPLESHIP PATH

What path will move people from unbeliever to disciple-maker?

Use this frame to identify your disciple-making path:



What training events will equip on this journey?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

What place will *Discovery Bible Reading* have in sowing gospel seed and cultivating growth?

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How will you avoid the trap of making members rather than disciples? How will you keep balance—for you want new disciples to also be members of your church plant?

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SESSION 9

FROM GROUPS TO PLANTS TO CHURCHES

The meaning of the word *church* is *gathering*. In the *harvest model* of multiplying disciples and planting churches the activity of gathering or harvest is the time when groups of new disciples are gathered into new churches.



4. GATHER

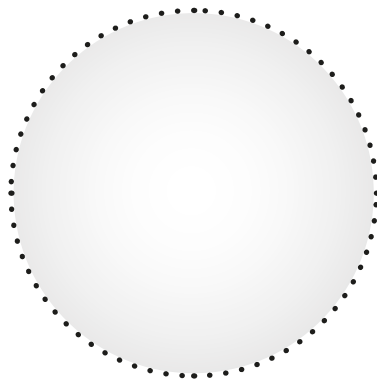
What is the difference between a group and a church? When does a group become a church plant, and how does a plant become an organised church?

Groups

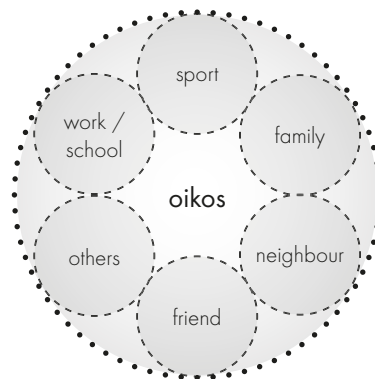
Groups might begin as small *Discovery Bible Reading* groups, perhaps as a “branch” from a church, youth group or Bible study group—or simply a group of friends getting together to share.

Groups can be represented by a dotted circle (1), with the dots indicating that the groups are fluid and open. Some may build around *households* or *oikos* (2) and represent various relational connections.

(1) Group



(2) Relational connections



These groups:

- Meet in homes, cafés or offices, at any time of day or night.
- Share food, fellowship, prayer and Bible reading.
- The natural leaders lead, and these groups are simple and reproducible.
- As a group of three to 10 family members, neighbours or friends, they might explore a gospel.
- There may be some limited ad hoc service in the neighbourhood.
- Some become believers, and perhaps some are baptised.
- But there is no long-term commitment to each other or the cause of Jesus Christ.

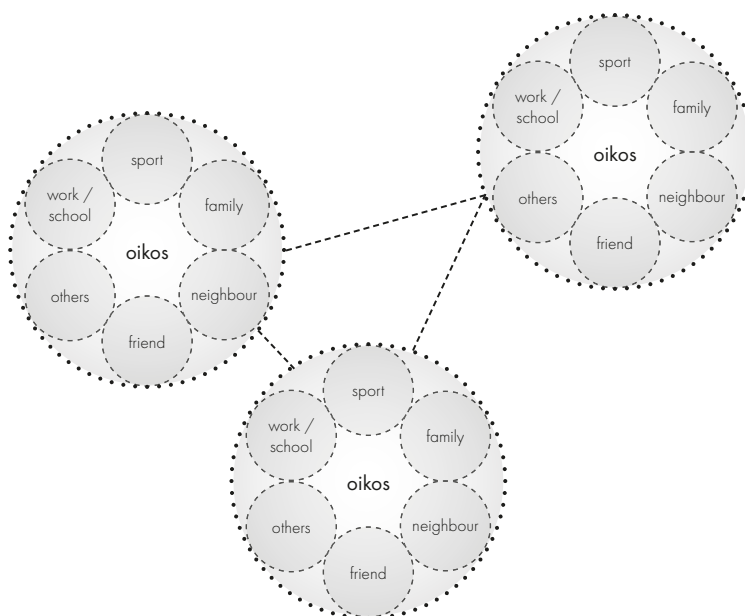
Church Plants

Church plants are gatherings of new disciples. They are simple in structure and need not be large—maybe five to 15 people. However, there is more commitment to mission, with focused equipping and multiplication.

Church plants can be represented by a dotted circle, portraying their openness to mission and their communities.

- There will be a number of groups or activities within—Bible and youth groups, etc.
- Each group within multiplies through “branch” groups—some with direct links (meaning, they know they are groups of the plant), and others with no direct links at this stage.

A single group can transition to being a church plant, or planting teams might cultivate a network of groups—even in a variety of *relational streams*:



WHAT ARE KEY CHURCH PLANT HEALTH INDICATORS? (ACTS 2:42-47)

These indicate the development of a group into a church plant:¹

- There are recognised local leaders.
- Regular gatherings to read the Word—keeping it simple.
- The Lord’s Supper is regularly celebrated—as an open communion.
- New disciples are equipped as they become disciples—to make other disciples.

There is a regular cycle of foundational studies in disciple-making for all.

There is a clear vision and responsibility for outreach to the region.

- There is a multiplying network of new *Discovery Bible Reading* groups.

As the new church plant’s small groups are cultivated, some of the groups also become church plants—and so the multiplication process multiplies.

- New disciples are baptised, with authority to baptise others.

¹ Steve Addison, *Pioneering Movements: Leadership that Multiplies Disciples and Churches*, IVP Books, 2015, page 91—uses the Church Health Indicators of Acts 2:36-47 to identify the journey from group to new church plant.

- There is the regular habit of giving (tithes and offerings) with agreed accountability/banking arrangements with headquarters.
- There is a strong growing identity that *we are church*, with:
 - a clear, simple *Church Planting Project Plan*.
 - a regular community service project being fostered.
 - recognition as a church plant within the denomination.
- There are simple, functional, multiplying structures with:
 - healthy relations with movement or denominational headquarters.
 - affirming relationships with the area *sisterhood* of other churches.
- Safe Places and legal awareness, with training and procedures developed.

APPLICATION

What other indicators does your team consider important?

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When could a small group—such as a *Discovery Bible Reading* group—become a church plant?

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Who could lead the new church plant?

- Natural leaders from the harvest—people of peace:
- The planting team:
- An elder from an existing church:

How will natural leaders be coached and mentored?

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What are the disadvantages of frequently inviting itinerant preachers?

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#SES9-VIDEO2

Complete Churches

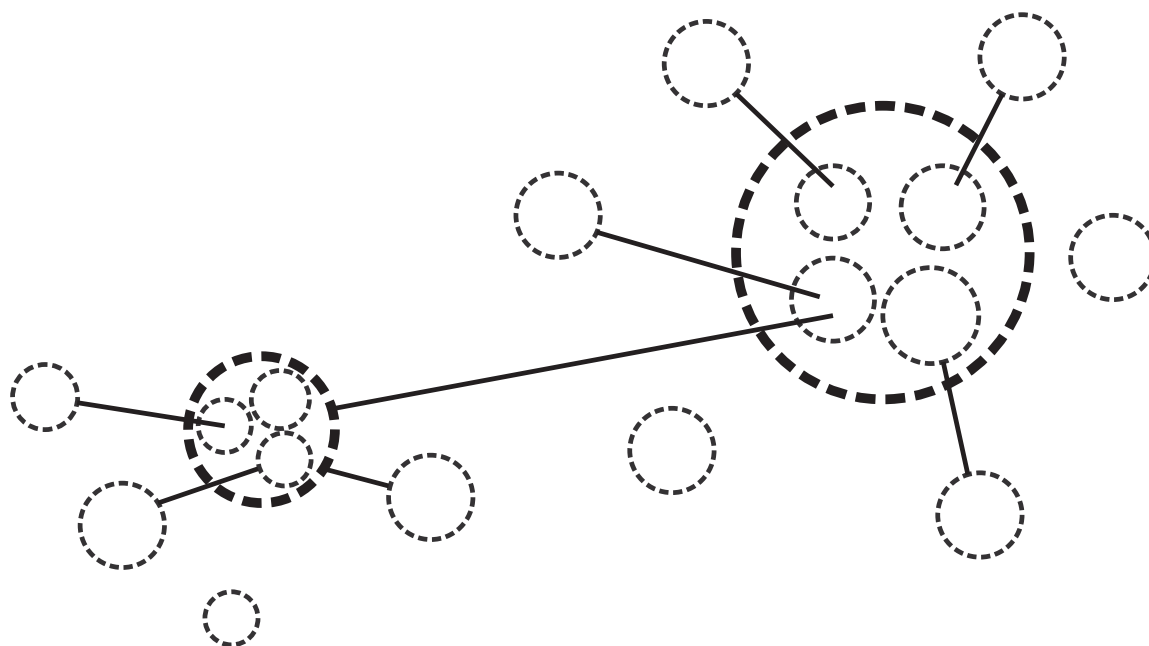
The churches that Paul planted were fully functioning complete churches. They had no church buildings and were small and based around *households of faith*. Today denominations and mission agencies each organise their churches differently. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has two levels of local church organisation:²

1. **Church company**—for isolated believers or a small groups, house churches or church-planting core groups whose objective is to become an organised church:
 - It is approved by the conference/mission executive committee.
 - A district pastor will be appointed—with a leader, secretary and treasurer chosen.
 - The church board for a company is the conference/mission executive committee.
2. **Organised church**—for a church plant or company that is prepared to take full responsibility as a church in organisation and for mission:
 - It is approved by the conference/mission executive committee.
 - A specific procedure of organisation and structure is outlined in policy.

Many plants do not start with isolated believers, nor without leadership:

- A core team of church planters can be organised as a church company.
- A church company can be approved for organised church status quite quickly.
- A church plant does not first need to be a church company before being an organised church— however, this can be a good process. As soon as the criteria are met, a church plant or church company should be organised into a church.

GROUP WORK: As a portrayal of an organised church, what qualities and characteristics does the following diagram suggest for a local church (on the right)?



² *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, Review & Herald Publishing, 2016, pages 36–8, <www.adventist.org/en/information/church-manual/>.



CRITERIA TO BE AN ORGANISED CHURCH

In numerous church planting conferences, hundreds of church planters, pastors and denominational leaders have suggested criteria that they think necessary for a group, church plant or *hand church* (as church plants are sometimes referred to in Pacific countries)—to become an organised church

APPLICATION

Rate each of the following criteria—where 5 is *vitaly important* and 1 is of *little importance*:

- A group of about 15 baptised members.
- Completed a *Church Formation* workshop. What would be included?
- A cooperative spirit towards district pastor and denominational leaders.
- Members trained and making disciples—with new disciples being baptised.
- Members and new disciples involved in multiple *Discovery Bible Reading* groups.
- At least three people qualified and equipped to lead as elders.
- The Lord's Supper is regularly celebrated.
- Sabbath school/youth groups are all conducting branch groups.
- There is a clear plan to plant another new church within 12 months.
- There is at least one ongoing service project in their community.
- There is a clear plan to return tithes and offerings to the conference/mission.
- Intergenerational experiences—with children and youth affirmed and involved.
- Ministries for all those attending—children, youth, marrieds, elderly, etc.
- Clear Safe Places and accountability procedures are being followed.
- Fostering a sustainable, multiplying network of churches (under houses, in homes, school classrooms, etc.) and is committed to multiplying simple, sustainable church plants.
- A training centre for church planting.

What further criteria would your team suggest?

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#SES10-VIDEO1

SESSION 10

A MULTIPLICATION PLAN



5. MULTIPLY

The culture of multiplication must be built into all plans from the very beginning.

1. JESUS laid the foundations of a sustainable and multiplying disciple-making movement.

What did He hand on to His disciples when He ascended? Acts 1:4-8

His model and teachings:

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His Spirit:

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2. PAUL pioneered the planting of multiple churches—the movement of disciple-making.

Review Paul's journeys. What did he hand on?

Key principles:

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Actions and methods:

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#SES10-VIDEO2

3. An **ENVIRONMENT** of multiplication:

- Encouragement (fan every interest).
- “Grand-parenting” (releasing).
- Simple church models (reproducible).
- Identifying and releasing “persons-of-peace.”

4. **COUNT** the right numbers.

Cultivate an environment of multiplication by counting multiplication numbers.

- What numbers represent multiplication?

The number of disciple-makers in your church plant (not members):

The number of *Discovery Bible Reading* groups (not member groups):

The number of leaders who are equipping others and multiplying themselves:

The number of teams equipped to plant another group or church:

The number of natural leaders from the harvest who are taking responsibility:

What other numbers would foster multiplication?

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#SES10-VIDEO3

5. **EQUIP** all disciples as disciple-makers.

What key processes will ensure multiplication in your plant?

- How will disciple makers be multiplied?

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- How will *Discovery Bible Reading* be fostered?

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- How will new disciples be equipped in disciple-making?

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- How will new church-planting teams be equipped and released?

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 #SES10-VIDEO4

6. **CULTIVATE** Holy Spirit presence.

How will your team foster an awareness and engagement with the Holy Spirit?

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How will the following become part of the regular life of your church plant?

- Agape meals and the Lord’s Supper:

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- Conversational prayer:

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- Anointing prayer:

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In what other ways will the church-planting team and members foster dependence upon the Holy Spirit?

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SESSION 11

MULTIPLYING SUSTAINABLE CHURCHES

Like the early apostles, we are committed to planting complete, stable, sustainable, healthy and multiplying churches. These might be small *households of faith* or community-type churches. In this session we consider what is necessary for a church to be sustainable—reflect on structures and possible venues, and the importance of cultivating an environment of prayer.

SUSTAINABILITY

For your church plant to be a sustainable community of faith, how would you prioritise the following:

- Leadership from within.
- Clear purpose (Acts 2:42–47; Revelation 14:6–13).
- Equipped disciples able to lead others to Jesus and multiply by:
 - Sharing their stories of meeting Jesus.
 - Inviting others to Him—and leading *Discovery Bible Reading* groups.
- Facilities that do not create a debt burden.
- Able to conduct worship without a visiting preacher.
- Simple and reproducible.
- Have clear values or attitudes.
- Clear beliefs.
- Functional structures.

What other issues does your team consider important for sustainability?

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#SES11-VIDEO2

FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURES—WHAT IS NEEDED?

As a team, discuss how your plant will relate to each of the following:

- Personnel:
 1. Who will do the tasks and how?
 2. How will decisions be made?
- Network:
 3. How will this gathering relate to the denominational mission/conference?
 4. Is this a direct relationship or through a “parent” church?
- Finances:
 5. How will tithes and offerings be collected, receipted and returned?
- Legal:
 6. What moral, legal and ethical responsibilities need to be met?
 - Working with children.
 - Safe Places.
 - Risk management.
 - Boundaries.
 - Insurance.
- Venue: where will the plant/church gather?
 7. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of:
 - The home where the group has been gathering until now.
 - Other homes.
 - Under a raised home or outdoors.
 - Facilities that can be used without great cost, including school classrooms, community houses or library seminar rooms.
 - A new church building.

#SES11-VIDEO3

OIKOS MAPPING AND PRAYER

In Session 6, each team member was encouraged to develop a personal *oikos* map—and to pray for those on their map.

APPLICATION

Review the principles of *conversational prayer* together.

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With your *oikos* maps and names before you (see page 23), spend time as a team praying for those on your map.



SESSION 12

CHURCH-PLANTING PROJECT PLAN

Using ideas you have developed in this Guide, draft your church-planting project plan.

1. Team: (usually 4 people)

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2. Place: Describe the people you will work with and place where you will work.

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List any *persons-of-peace* you can already identify:

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3. Vision: What do you believe is God's end-vision for the church you will plant?

Disciple-makers:

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Multiplying groups and churches:

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4. Mission: Why will this church plant exist?

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List three or four scriptures that support your mission and vision:

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5. Values and actions: Make a list of your values and the actions to cultivate them.

Value—attitudes we value:

Actions—that flow from these:

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6. Beliefs: What key beliefs will define your church plant?

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What key beliefs will be important for the people of your community?

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7. Disciple-making: What path will you take for an unbeliever to become a disciple-maker?

In Jesus' disciple-making, what could all new disciples do?

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What place will *Discovery Bible Reading* have in this journey?

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Steps on the path:

What training events will fit into this journey?

- | | |
|---------|-------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |
| 7. | |

8. Multiplication: Describe how your church plant will multiply:

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9. Feedback loop: When and how will you evaluate whether God is pleased?

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Share this project plan with a number of people—including an experienced church-planter or church-planting mentor—to get further ideas.

Submit this plan to your leaders and church planting coordinator.



EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

After six months, use these questions to discuss the progress of the new church plant:

What do we need to change?

- What ministries or programs need to close or be placed in recess?

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- Where do we see the “fires” of the Spirit “spotting” in our community?

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- How do we “fan the fires”?

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- What are our strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats?

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- Are we connecting to other relational streams?

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- Are we multiplying? How many other churches are we currently planting?

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Review: Five foundational scriptures

1. Disciples multiply in relational streams (Matthew 28:18–20).
2. Kingdom parables—working the four fields (Mark 4:26–29).
3. Evangelism, gathering and multiplication (Luke 10:1–24).
4. Holy Spirit activity (Acts 1:1–2:47).
5. As His body (1 Corinthians 12:27), churches are to live like Jesus (Philippians 2:1–11).

#SES12-VIDEO3

DISTRICT CHURCH FORMATION PLAN

District: District Director:

List by name all organised churches—and identify those that have restructured their Bible classes and ministries into teams according to where their members live:

.....

For each organised church, list:

- 1. Names and places
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
2. Name of elder who oversees five to six Sabbath school classes:
3. List of hand churches (or companies) cared for by the "mother church":
• List branch Sabbath schools for each hand church:
.....
• List names of elders overseeing five to six Sabbath school classes in companies of hand churches:
.....
4. List the criteria that each hand church needs to meet to be organised:
.....
5. List the year when these criteria will be met:

In each district/province, list every town, village or area that needs to be entered:

- 1. List district:
2. List date for entry:
3. Identify team for entry:
4. Outline the plan for each place:
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NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



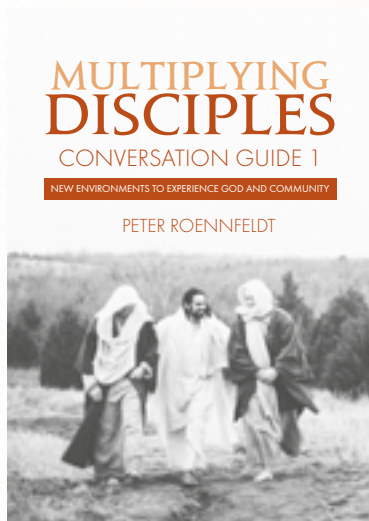
NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

EXPLORE OTHER STEPS

MULTIPLYING DISCIPLES AND CULTIVATING MOVEMENTS

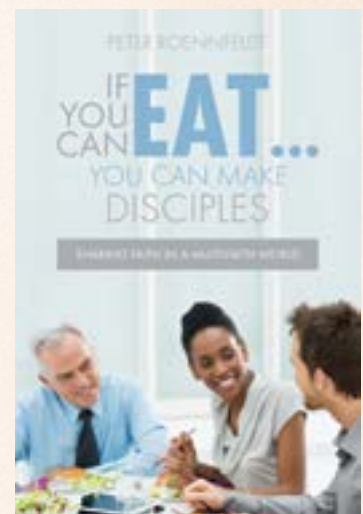
Conversation Guide 1—*Multiplying Disciples*



Multiplying Disciples
Guide—for discussion

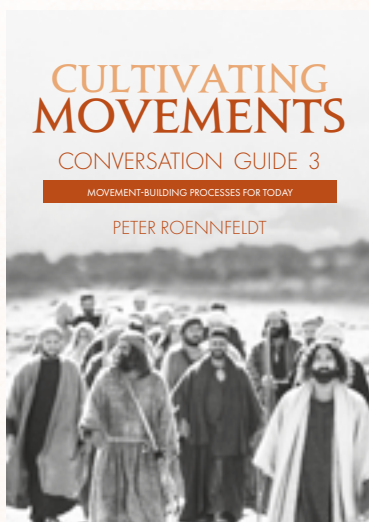


Follow every story of Jesus
in disciple-making.

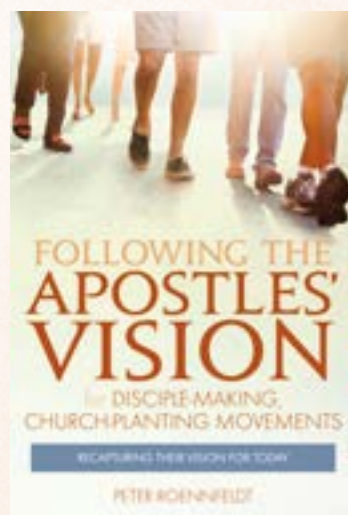


Jesus' practical training—
anyone-can-do-it methods
of disciple-making.

Conversation Guide 3—*Cultivating Movements*



Cultivating Movements
Guide—for discussion



Be inspired by the vision
of “no place left” where the
gospel has not been shared.



Be challenged by Jesus' vision
for church.

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Making new disciples is the foundation for planting new churches that multiply. This is what Jesus taught His first disciples to do. And this is what the early disciples and apostles did. In new cities and districts, Paul multiplied disciples, then planted multiplying churches. Equip yourself and your team to make new disciples who can, in turn, make more new disciples. It is a spiritual journey that demands teamwork, faith and prayer.

Work through this Conversation Guide with a group of friends at your own pace, or be guided by the free videos from www.following-Jesus.com.

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Peter Roennfeldt (DMin) is the author of eight books that draw on his lifetime of sharing the gospel, planting churches and serving as a pastor to pastors. Having lived in four countries and equipped church-planting teams in almost 60, Peter now lives in Melbourne, Australia, with his wife Judy, but continues to equip and coach church planters, pastors and movement leaders around the world.



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