ABSTRACT

RECRUITING AND FUNDING CHURCH PLANTERS:

BEST PRACTICES FOR PLANTING NETWORKS

by

Jeffrey A. Horsman

C. Peter Wagner said, "Planting new churches is the most effective evangelistic methodology known under heaven" (168). To fulfill the Great Commission, it makes sense to use the most effective evangelistic methodology and continually plant new churches. However, missiologists like Ed Stetzer agree that not just anyone can plant a new church. A person with the right gifting and experience needs to be found. Also, Stetzer states that most denominations do not have the budget needed to continually plant churches. The purpose of this study was to examine recruiting and funding practices in church planting networks in North America and recommend best practices for new church planting networks.

This project looks at five church planting networks of various sizes in North America to determine best practices for recruiting and funding. Five leaders from these networks were interviewed concerning their past and recommended practices. Twenty-five recent church planters from each network were asked about how they were recruited and funded and the impact it had on their ministry.

This research determined that the best practices for recruiting and funding church planters in North American include developing a relational pipeline, mentoring perspective church planters, partnering with existing churches, and encouraging church planters to enter their communities in co-vocational work.

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BEST PRACTICES FOR PLANTING NETWORKS

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by

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Linda Horsman. My wonderful wife who has continued to support me, encourage me, and love me through all the trials, struggles, victories and challenges. I love you more today than I did yesterday, but not as much as I will tomorrow.

And finally, Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I am amazed that You would call me and guide me on such an incredible journey. I am humbled that I might assist in Your work of calling people to come home to You.

CHAPTER 1

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter looks at two key issues of church planting: recruiting church planters and financial funding for church planters. It includes a personal introduction from the researcher and the reason the researcher decided to pursue this topic. The chapter will also give the specific purpose for this research. It introduces some key questions that will guide the research. It will also define key terms, relevant literature, and methods used in this research.

Personal Introduction

I had the privilege of serving both my God and my country as an Army Chaplain. While I was on active duty, I attended a ministry conference. This conference had one break out session that focused on church planting. Since I knew of someone interested in church planting, I attended the session and gathered all the information I could to give to him. However, on my return flight from the conference, I finished my previous reading material. I decided to read all the materials I gathered for my colleague. This was my introduction to the concept of church planting.

Towards the end of my time in military service, I felt the specific call to church planting. I was not connected to a specific church planting group. My denomination was not opposed to church planting, but it had no real vision for it and had no resources available. I knew I was being called. My wife and I had prayed and received confirmation that we were to go and plant a new church. We were not being recruited by others, and we were unsure of how to fund a church plant.

I decided to begin with my denomination, The Church of the Nazarene. I felt led by the Holy Spirit to return to my home state of Indiana. I spoke with various denominational leaders and secured an appointment with one. I met with District leadership of the Indianapolis District. I was given an open door to talk with area pastors, but I was not given any resources.

I talked to multiple pastors in my denomination. They were not opposed to the idea of a new church plant in their district, but they offered no support. They were very focused on the mission of their local congregation and were not interested in developing church planting on the district. The Indianapolis District of the Church of the Nazarene did not have a plan for recruiting or funding church planters.

My wife and I prayed in earnest about the next step. We felt strongly that we wanted to plant a church with the support of another church or region. The literature I had read highly encouraged this. I also desired to have the coaching and accountability that comes with this type of support. I finally asked God to show me where He wanted us to go and provide the resources necessary.

Meanwhile, First Missionary Church in Berne Indiana was searching for a church planter. They had a vision to plant a new church in the neighboring community. They had raised funds to do this and had prayed for the next step. They had tried to find a church planter but had failed in two specific attempts. They nearly gave up and were praying for God to provide the church planter. They had raised resources as a mother church but were not being fruitful in recruiting. They were praying for God to supply a planter.

God answered both our prayers with a phone call. My brother-in-law had begun attending First Missionary Church and heard the pastor talk about church planting. My

wife, his sister, had also mentioned church planting in conversation with her family. My brother-in-law called me and asked if I was interested in talking to his pastor. I connected with his pastor, and we started the journey of planting The ROCK Church in Portland, Indiana.

The two areas of recruiting and finances nearly halted this project before it began. Twelve years later, The ROCK is a vibrant church that is actively engaging the community and making disciples who make disciples.

As the lead pastor of this church, I presented a vision to plant more churches. I connected with the Missionary Churches in my surrounding area. We developed a team to give mutual support to each other and to actively engage in church planting. We did not have the resources to plant a new church individually, so the seven churches involved combined their resources to plant a church.

Even as we raised the funds, we struggled in the area of recruiting. We raised three years' support but did not find a church planter for two years. Only by appealing to the pastors at our annual conference did we get a strong lead and recruit a church planter. Again, the areas of funding and recruiting were a concern.

God again appealed to my apostolic heart and called me to be involved in planting more churches. The issue of providing proper funding and recruiting strong church planters for church plants has again become a major issue in my life.

As the director of the newly formed Crossroads Church Planting Network, I desire to find the best answer to the problems of funding and recruiting church planters. By looking at the practices of other networks and denominations, I will be able to have a clear picture of the methods that will produce the best results for our network in Indiana.

Statement of the Problem

In order to fulfill the Great Commission, we must be able to multiply our church planting efforts. C. Peter Wagner said, "Planting new churches is the most effective evangelistic methodology known under heaven" (Wagner 168). Ed Stetzer said, "In order to engage in church planting effectively, it is important to consider who can plant a church" (*Planting Missional Churches* 73).

To effectively plant more churches, churches and denominations must have a funding strategy and a recruiting strategy that enable them to maximize their efforts. It is getting harder to recruit fully qualified church planters. Most churches and denominations are not able to fully fund new church plants. If best practices are not found and developed, then church planting will not go forward at the pace necessary and the church will fail at the biblical mandate to make disciples who make disciples and multiply churches.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this research was to discover and evaluate recruiting and funding practices of church planters in church planting networks in order to develop the best methods for the Crossroads Church Planting Network.

Research Questions

The research questions are designed to gain specific information that will contribute to the purpose of this study. The intent was to find the best practice from church planting networks and understand the history of the different networks in order to have the best practices integrated into a new network. Not only is the research gauging the effectiveness of each plant, but it recognizes the impact on the church planter.

Research Question #1

What do church planting network leaders and church planters indicate are the best ways to recruit and fund church planters?

The research methods and instruments used were a questionnaire and a follow up interview of Network Leaders and a survey for Church Planters.

Research Question #2

What do church planting network leaders and church planters indicate are barriers to recruiting and funding church planters?

The research methods and instruments used were a questionnaire and follow up interview of Network Leaders and a survey for Church Planters.

Research Question #3

What are best practices moving forward for recruiting and funding church planters?

The research methods and instruments used included a synthesis of data gathered in answering RQs 1 & 2, plus additional information from Literature Review.

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Rationale for the Project

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The first reason this study matters is that believers are to carry out the Great Commission. Jesus said in Matthew 28:19–20 "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Jesus gave a biblical mandate to make disciples. Ott and Wilson write, "…the command to baptize and the command to teach obedience to all that Christ commanded…are virtually impossible to fulfill apart from

planting churches" (22). In following the biblical example from the Acts of the Apostles, making disciples necessitates church planting. It was assumed that as evangelism took place, followers of Jesus would unite together in the form of a church. Luke writes in Acts 2:41, "Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day." Each person who became a follower was added to the number of those who were a part of the church. As Paul went out to fulfill the great commission, new churches started everywhere he made disciples. He says in 1 Corinthians 16:19, "The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the church that meets at their house." As Christians strive to fulfill the Great Commission, they must plant new churches.

The second reason this study matters is in order to plant new churches, churches and denominations must recruit church planters. Church planters have a unique mindset. Ralph Moore says that church planters, and more specifically movement leaders are "monomaniacs." He says this term will "quite accurately describe a kingdom-driven leader who has an unshakeable call by God to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to as many as possible" (22). He calls Paul a monomaniac because of that single mindedness that borders on madness to bring others to Christ and into the community of the church to become disciples. In order to plant more churches and fulfill the Great Commission, churches and denominations must find and or train these apostolic leaders to make disciples who make disciples and plant churches that plant churches.

The third reason this study is important is that real ministry takes real money. Paul tells the Church at Corinth that a collection is needed to fund the Apostolic work (1 Cor. 16; 2 Cor. 8). Chris Ridgeway of Acts 29 says, "When strategic planning, money is

one of the first things a church planter should think about" ("Four Models of

Fundraising"). Yet most denominations run out of church planting money each year

(Stetzer, Rethinking Church Plant Funding). They must look at and evaluate the different

funding models and determine which models are viable and successful. They can also

understand how different methods of funding can be effective and apply those to a new

network of church plants.

The fourth reason this study is important is that the findings may encourage

additional churches, networks and denominations to embrace church planting and expand

the kingdom. Jesus said in Acts 1:8, "…you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all

Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." This directive to be a witness is best

accomplished through church planting. It is not the calling of a small group of pastors and

Christians. It is the calling of all Christendom. Many see the call to start new churches

but are overcome by the obstacles. Recruiting and financing are two key issues that could

hinder or prohibit church planting. Researching the best practices of existing church

planting networks can provide answers to overcome these two hurdles and fulfill the

mandate to multiply disciples and multiply churches.

Definition of Key Terms

1. Church Planting

Church planting is a process of starting a new local congregation/church. It is not

just a new worship service in an existing church. It may be started with the help of an

existing congregation but eventually is set apart from the originating body, although it

may continue as a denominational or network relationship.

2. Church Planting Network

Bobby Harington says, "A network is a group of individuals connected together, and a church planting network is a group of church leaders who are connected with each other for the purpose of planting churches" (Bigelow and Harrington). For this study, a network is an organization that exists to plant churches and offer coaching and assistance to church planters in the network.

3. Bi-vocational

This term refers to the pastor/church planter who works in a secular job or occupation while engaging in the work of church planting.

4. Co-vocational

Similar to bi-vocations, a co-vocational pastor/planter works another job while planting. The difference is that the additional job works in conjunction with the church planting efforts instead of merely dividing the planter's time.

5. Missional Community

Stetzer defines missional as "adopting the posture of a missionary, joining Jesus on mission, learning and adapting to the culture around you while remaining biblically sound" (Stetzer *Planting Missional Churches* 1). A missional community is a group of people who have joined together in the mission of making disciples.

6. Converts

Jesus said in Luke 10:2, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." The harvest represents the people who are reached through evangelism and are discipled to become followers of Jesus. A leader who comes from the harvest is one who was not recruited for the mission but was a part of the local church or missional community.

7. Level 5 Church

A level 5 church is a church that is focused on multiplying rather than gathering. Dave Ferguson and Todd Wilson state that the key characteristics of a level 5 church are "multiplying, releasing, and sending" (Ferguson And Wilson, Exponential 2015). A level 5 church will continue to make disciples, but it will train and release the best to go and make disciples and plant new churches.

8. Crossroads Church Planting Network

Crossroads Church Planting Network (CCPN) is a new church planting network within the Central Region of the Missionary Church. CCPN is focused on making disciples who make disciples and planting churches that plant churches. It is headquartered in Marion, Indiana.

Delimitations

This research is limited to church denominations or planting networks that have been involved in strategic church planting over the last 10 years. While churches may have planted a church, this project focuses on the systematic approach to church planting rather than a "one and done" approach.

I focused on the recruiting and funding practices utilized in the past 10 years. The landscape of church planting is changing. Ed Stetzer stated that he has written his book *Planting Missional Churches* three times due to the changing climate of church planting (Stetzer xi). In this light, this project examines the freshest practices that are being effective in the field today.

I did not investigate funding church planting through endowments. Although a viable method for funding church plants, an endowment may not be available to a new church planting network.

I also limited my research to church planting in North America. While others are doing incredible works around the globe in the area of church planting, this project focuses on understanding recruiting and funding church plants in the North American culture and climate. This limitation is direct at discerning the best methodologies for effective church planting for the Crossroads Church Planting Network.

Review of Relevant Literature

In this section, I present literature relevant to church planting, church planting networks, and recruiting and funding church planters. Through listening to experienced church planters and network leaders, the review of relevant literature distills, understands and recommends the best practices for funding and recruiting church planters for church planting networks.

There is a biblical and theological groundwork for church planting. In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke depicts church planting in the early church. The Apostles listened to Jesus' call in the Great Commission to go and make disciples of all nations. Peter began in Acts 2 by preaching to all nations assembled in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Peter saw God open the door to the Gentiles through his vision from God and his interaction with Cornelius in Acts 10. Paul takes up the torch as he becomes the Apostle to the Gentiles. His missionary journeys are all about making disciples that start new churches.

This project is also rooted in dialogue with leading contemporary authors on church planting today. Ed Stetzer lays out the biblical and cultural necessity of church planting and the calling of church planters. Ralph Moore writes about creating multiplication networks and movements. In his book *New to 5ive* he gives not only practical advice and direction but also key multiplication concepts and challenges that must be addressed for effective church planting and multiplication. Charles Ridley is the pioneer in developing an effective church planter assessment tool. Literature from these authors and others like them will be key in researching the importance of recruiting and funding church planters.

Organizations like Christianity Today, Seedbed, and Exponential continually write about the trends and direction of church planting in our society today. Relevant articles and writings from such organizations are vital in contributing to an understanding of key recruiting and funding practices today.

Practitioners and church planting networks also have created documentation and research concerning the themes of this project. Five different church planting networks will be reviewed to determine which methods have been most effective and which ones have been detrimental to recruiting and funding church planters.

Finally, this project will examine the literature of church planting denominations. While this project focuses on what practices will be effective for a network, key information from the efforts of denominations that are engaging in strategic church planting can prove helpful to a network model. Church planting denominations Converge, The United Methodist Church, the Wesleyan Church, and the Missionary Church.

Research Methodology

In order to research the practices of funding and recruiting church planting, the researcher connected with both the leaders of strategic church planting and the practitioners of church planting.

This project uses interviews and open-ended questionnaires with the leaders of church planting movements. These leaders have experience in recruiting new church planters. They may have also developed pipelines of recruits. They also will have experience with what did not work so well in their situation. Open-ended questions elicit responses that show the different situation (urban and rural), as well as the levels of experience the projected planters may or may not have had. These questions allow the researcher to be able to gauge the effect that coaching, mentoring, and accountability had on recruits. Open-ended questions and interviews allow the leaders to provide information from their unique vantage point, which may otherwise be unavailable to the researcher and this project.

This project used a survey questionnaire with multiple choice and scale answers with church plant practitioners. This methodology provides a measurable response from different planters on the effectiveness of the different methods used by their networks or denominations.

Type of Research

The researcher used qualitative research method for this study. The goal was to "study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (Sensing 57). Specifically, the

study focused on church planters, church planting networks and the impact of funding and recruiting methods on their effectiveness.

The design was pre-intervention. The purpose was to recognize the different methods of funding and recruiting in networks, learn from their most effective methods, and recommend how CCPN might adopt the best practices.

Participants

The research was focused on two distinct groups of people. The first group consisted of leaders in church planting networks. These leaders had specific knowledge and control of the recruiting and funding practices of the network. The second group consisted of church planters from the same networks. These church planters were actively planting churches within the past ten years.

For network leaders, the researcher used a mixture of interviews and open-ended questionnaires. Leaders were from the church planting networks that were active at the time of the research. These leaders were directly involved in the funding of new church plants and the recruiting of church planters.

For church planters, the researcher used a survey with both multiple-choice questions and scale questions. The researcher gained permission from network leadership to conduct an email survey of church planters who have been actively participating in planting in the past five years. The surveys asked for information on the impact funding and recruiting had on the planter and how it affected the plant.

Instrumentation

The researcher used open-ended questions in interviews and questionnaires to gain narrative answers from network and denominational leaders. The researcher used multiple choice and scale answer surveys with church planters.

Data Collection

Research was conducted from January 2019 to December 2019. Interviews with leaders were conducted in person. Questionnaires were used to follow up with those leaders. Surveys with church planters were conducted on the internet.

For network leaders, the researcher designed 7 open-ended questions. Questions were given in one-on-one interview sessions with 5 network leaders. Each interview was conducted in an office to provide confidentiality and minimize interruptions or via Zoom with leaders in their offices. The purpose of each interview, including duration, intended use, and nature, were given prior to each interview. Permission was secured to record each interview, and the research also took notes.

For church planters, the researcher designed a survey of 21 questions, using a multiple choice or scale format. SurveyMonkey, an online survey service was utilized. Permission was granted from network leaders to send surveys to church planters active in their organization in the past ten years. Email addresses were obtained from organizations and used to send invitations to the prospective pool. Consent was required of each participant in the survey, and the nature, scope, and intended use of the survey was described. Each survey was confidential.

Data Analysis

Each of the interviews was transcribed. The raw data from both the interviews and the surveys was organized into specific categories for close examination. The researcher

looked closer into the text, beyond the simple narration to the "thick descriptions"

(Sensing 195). This included paying close attention to the gestures, actions, and practices

of each interviewee to understand deeper or implied meanings behind the narrative. The

researcher looked at the literal meaning of the answers given, the implied meaning

gleaned during the interviews, and the reflexive understanding of the data by the

researcher. The researcher looked for different patterns, themes and categories. The

researcher considered the areas of overlap, the areas of disagreement, as well as the

silences of the data.

Generalizability

This study is reproducible. Differences or variances might occur when

interviewing different leaders or different organizations with different biases or mission

focus. This research could be applied by any leader or organization desiring to begin a

new church planting network or improve an existing network.

<center>**Project Overview**</center>

Chapter 2 covers the Literature Review for this project by exploring the necessity

of church planting and finding church planters. This chapter first addresses the biblical

and theological call to make disciples and start new churches. Then it reviews the

contemporary expressions of church planting. The review first covers the different

models or strategies used for funding new churches and then the qualifications for an

effective church planter and how networks and denominations recruit church planters.

Chapter 3 focuses on the Research Methodology for the project. It explains the

methods the researcher used for collecting data. The researcher used a qualitative

approach in conducting interviews and surveys. This chapter also discusses the

participant selection process and the researcher's process for analyzing the data.

Chapter 4 shares Evidence for the Project. This chapter begins with an overview

and then presents the evidence that discovered in the research process. This chapter ends

with a summary of the major finding in response to the guiding research questions.

Chapter 5 covers the Learning Report for the Project. After an overview, this

chapter explains the major findings, along with the researcher's personal observations,

corresponding connection to the literature and relation to biblical and theological

framework. It then notes the impact that these findings had on the funding and recruiting

of church planters. This chapter concludes with recommendations and reflections from

the researcher's study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter includes a review of literature relevant to church planting and funding church planters. The first section investigates the biblical foundations for the call of the church planter. The second section addresses the theology of church planting and the church planter. The third section reviews the characteristics of an effective church planter. The fourth section explores contemporary strategies for finding and funding new church planters.

Biblical Foundations

Since Evangelical Christianity has held firm to the Reformation principle of *sola scriptura* (scripture is the supreme authority for spiritual truth), a literature review for evangelical Church planting and church planters must begin with the Bible. This section is an overview of scriptures that focus on God sending people out to share His message with the world.

Old Testament

The Old Testament gives the history of God's people. It moves through God's creative act in bringing the world into existence and focuses on God's redemptive act, leading up to His ultimate redemptive act in the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ. While God's chosen people of Israel are central, the Old Testament also communicates that God is redeeming the whole world to Himself. God continually sent people out to communicate His message to all nations. This literature review focuses on five Old Testament passages to illustrate that God is a sending God.

Genesis 1:28

"God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'" (Gen. 1:28, New International Version).

Humankind was the last part of creation, the crowning piece of creation. Humankind is set apart from the rest of creation. God created humans to rule over the animals of creation. God gave the plants to be food. Humanity was above all of creation.

Also, humans were made in God's image. Humanity was created in the likeness of God, that humans resemble God. Luis Dizon says this likeness is meant to encompass intellect, morality, purity, unity and dominion (Dizon). John Calvin said, "The Image of God extends to everything in which the nature of man surpasses that of all other species of animals" (107).

While this verse is a part of the creation narrative, it is also a call to multiplication. Just as humankind was created in God's image, Imago Dei, humans were also given God's mission, Missio Dei. Humankind is sent out to "be fruitful and multiply." Being fruitful and multiplying can be looked at in a larger sense than procreation. Andrew Schmutzer states, "Since we are created in God's image, we are to be fruitful, or creative" (Schmutzer). He sees being fruitful and multiplying as being a part of God's creative mission on the earth. Although he focuses on the aspect of growing in God's creation, the idea can also be applied to God's mission of growing the Kingdom of God. In reviewing Robert Logan's book *Be Fruitful and Multiply*, Ryan Parker reasoned that "…the biblical impetus for multiplication, for all of church life, can be developed or implied from the Created Order command to 'be fruitful and multiply'"

(Parker). God's call to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth, saw in essence a call to the first humans to spread the knowledge of God throughout the earth.

Genesis 12:1–3

"The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (Gen. 12:1–3, New International Version).

This section of scripture has been called The Calling or The Blessing passage. Abram was called away from his family and called to a new land that God would point out to him. John Wesley said, "We have here the call by which Abram was removed out of the land of his nativity into the land of promise, which was designed both to try his faith and obedience, and also to set him apart for God" (Wesley). Abram's obedience had a profound impact on the entire world. Gregory Brown recognized that, "Abraham's call was very special. God called him out of a rebellious world to be a conduit for salvation. He is a pivotal character in redemptive history" (Brown).

This calling leads to the blessing that comes through Abram. Through his obedience to God, God promised that Abram would be a blessing to all peoples on earth. In his commentary, Matthew Henry wrote, "Jesus Christ is the great blessing of the world, the greatest that ever the world possessed. All the true blessedness the world is now, or ever shall be possessed of, is owing to Abram and his posterity" (Henry). The obedience of Abram opened the way for God to bless the whole world through salvation in Jesus. Tremper Longman III says, "One cannot overestimate the importance of these

three verses not only for the Abraham story and the Pentateuch but for the entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments." (159). Walter Brueggemann agrees and adds, "This unit presents the primary summons of God, the ready answer of Abraham, and the derivative blessing to the nations" (Brueggemann).

The idea of calling and blessing are important for church planting. Following the example of Abram, church planters must be willing to listen to and obey the call of God, to leave their homes or church where they are comfortable, and to go to a place God shows them. In that place, they are to be a blessing by sharing God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ and planting a new community of believers. Dennis Olson points out that, "God's chosen people never exist in isolation. They are called to a wider mission than just self-preservation. They are never allowed to claim an exclusive hold on God's concern. God remains committed to all creation and all humanity" (Olson). Radstock Ministries lists Genesis 12:1–3 as one of their key verses for church planting. As a part of their biblical rational for church planting, they state, "The God of the Bible is a God of mission. The Bible is the story of God's plan to save his people. God's promise to Abraham was that he would be a blessing to the nations; Israel was called to be a light to the Gentiles and in Christ this is fulfilled as the good news of salvation goes out to the nations." ("Biblical Rational"). The call to be a blessing is essential for church planters.

Isaiah 6:8–10

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!' He said, 'Go and tell this people: 'Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.' 10 Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they

might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed'" (Isa. 6:8–10).

The prophet Isaiah had an incredible vision of God. He recognized God's majesty and authority, as well as his own unworthiness. After receiving a cleansing touch, Isaiah heard God's call to go and speak His word to the people. Isaiah was to go and pronounce judgement on the people for their sin and give an opportunity for repentance. Bill Pratt said of this, "Nobody would ever be able to say that God never warned them, that God never commanded that they change their behavior. Isaiah was to make sure of that" (Pratt).

Even though God declared that the people would not understand or perceive what Isaiah was saying, Isaiah was sent with a call to repentance and to turn to God. He had seen God's glory and humbled himself before God. Then he responded to God's call to go and tell others of God's call to repentance.

The idea of calling and sending is strong in Isaiah 6. Isaiah had seen the holiness of God, had received God's cleansing touch, and responded to God's call to go to his people to share his word. This is also a central call for church planters. Chuck Smith notes that "Once God has touched your life, then God wants to use your life to touch others" (Smith). After giving a laundry list of reasons to plant churches, Aaron Proffitt of Acts 29 stated recognizing God's glory in Isaiah 6 was pivot to him for planting churches. He said, "We plant churches for one singular reason: the glory of God!... We plant churches because it puts God and His matchless perfection, greatness, and beauty on display" (Proffitt). Isaiah also influenced Ben Whittinghill. He writes:

Isaiah doesn't ask God where He's sending whoever responds. He doesn't ask

how long he'd be gone. All he knows is that this glorious King who's cleansed

him and taken away his guilt is inviting someone to do something for Him, and

Isaiah's unqualified response is "I'm available to You! Whatever You say.

Wherever You send me. I'll go. Send ME." (Whittinghill)

Jeremiah 29:4–7

"This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into

exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 'Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat

what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give

your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in

number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I

have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will

prosper'" (Jer. 29:4–7).

God directed Jeremiah to speak to the people He had moved to exile in Babylon.

His message is direct. The people were to seek the welfare, the peace, the prosperity of

the city they were in. They were to be there for the long haul. God directed them to pray

for, live in, and connect with the city. He said if the city prospers, so will you. "Interest

yourselves in the 'peace' or welfare of the city, whether Babylon or any other place

where ye may be in exile, and pray for its welfare, for your own well-being is inseparable

from it" (Spence 587).

God's directive is reminiscent of His command to "be fruitful and multiply." "The

Lord's concern here is that the people of Judah grow in numbers and strength in this exile

even as they did in their sojourn in Egypt. They are not to wither and disappear as did the

people of the Northern Kingdom during their exile a century and a half earlier"

(Donovan). God was directing the people to not fade into the background, but to have an

impact on their city.

Phil Colgan sees this admonition not as a 'call to the city' as many have

interpreted these verses, but a call to be an influence. He says, "…don't withdraw from

the world, but overcome evil with good. Don't hate your enemy; feed him instead. Don't

hide away, but love your neighbour in the broadest sense of that word" (Colgan). Robert

Jamieson takes the next step and says, "There is here a foretaste of gospel love towards

enemies" (Jamieson).

While this is a clear picture to be a benefit to the place you live, it is not an

invitation to adopt the culture that surrounds you. Jeremiah's counsel does not constitute

"a directive to assimilate into the dominant culture and to embrace its maxims, values,

and patterns of behavior" (Stulman 251). "They are to continue following Yahweh and to

observe his laws faithfully even as they pray for those who do not" (Donovan).

This idea of growing where you are planted and being an influence wherever God

directs is a key fact for church planters. John Piper said, "Seek the welfare of the place

where God has sent you. Think of yourself as sent there by God for his glory. Because

you are" (Piper, Seek Your City's Good).

Stephen Trainer saw God's directive in Jeremiah as a call to truly know the

community where God called him to plant a church. "No one should ever know more

about your city than you. If you seek to genuinely serve your city, and even more

specifically a community within your city, become a student of that community. Study its

history, come to understand why it is the way it is. Know the backstories and how all the pieces fit together" (Trainer).

The call to seek the peace and welfare of your city has been a call to church planters to really connect with their community and make an impact for God. It is a call to not fight against one's community, but rather to be a blessing to the community.

Jonah 3:1–5

"Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: 'Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.' Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, 'Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown.' The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth" (Jonah 3:1–5)

The story of Jonah is the story of a reluctant prophet (or church planter). Jonah shows how God's call is persistent even when a person is resistant. Guzik argues:

> This shows the amazing love of God to His wayward people. Though Jonah did everything he could to resist the first call of God, after Jonah repented God called him again – though God was under no obligation to do it. He did it out of mercy and grace… God was determined to do the work through Jonah, so He did not give up on the reluctant prophet. God is often just this committed to doing His work through a man. (Guzik)

Jonah was also to proclaim the message God gave to him. This is a call that every preacher should heed. J. O. Keen said, "The preacher's true function is to declare what God commands him. The message as well as the commission must bear the impress of

Divinity. Divine thoughts, purposes, desires, truths, and not human notions, creeds,

sentiments, opinions, fancies, must ever fill the mind, inspire the tongue, constrain the

utterance, and fire the eloquence and enthusiasm of every ambassador of the Cross"

(Keen). As Jonah relayed God's word, his preaching had the effect that God desired.

This call and direction from God are important to church planters, even reluctant

ones. Ryan Rice sensed a call to plant a church in his hometown in New Orleans, but he

did not immediately accept God's call. "I can totally relate to Jonah," Rice said. "I had

this call, even desire, but I didn't want to go. It was a reluctant kind of thing" (qtd. in

Burton). Church planters must learn from and not repeat the story of Jonah. Fred Herron

looks at how planters must avoid Jonah's hardened heart towards outsiders. Herron

writes, "He [Jonah] actually gets angry with God for demonstrating mercy to the

Ninevites. Here is the crux of Jonah's sin. Having readily received mercy and blessing for

himself, he was stubbornly resistant to share it with those outside the family of faith" (9-

10). Church planters must receive the call of God, share the word of God, and have the

heart of God for those who hear the message of God.

New Testament

The New Testament gives God's redemptive plan through Jesus Christ. John

writes in his Gospel, "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the

Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name" (John

20:3, New International Version). The New Testament shares personal accounts of the

ministry of Jesus in the Gospels. Luke tells the story of the early church in Acts. The

Epistles were written with instructions and admonishments to churches that were started

in various areas. These were shared among the churches to build and strengthen

believers. And finally, Revelation contains instruction and prophecy, written with much symbolism, to early churches. God sent people out to share the gospel with new areas, resulting in the growth in new believers and the beginning of new churches. This literature review will focus on Jesus's call to go and the response of the early church as found in the Gospels and the book of Acts.

Matthew 28:18–20

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age'" (Matt. 28:18–20).

This section of scripture is known as the Great Commission. Jesus explains that he has the authority from the Father to give the mission to the disciples. John Ritenbaugh writes:

'Authority' is translated from exousia, which has wide usage in the Greek language. It can be used to indicate jurisdiction, privilege, capacity, freedom, influence, force, and right, besides authority and power. Obviously, its usage is not restricted to sheer, brute strength. Jesus, then, is perfectly equipped to handle our needs in the widest variety of situations…His disciples are to understand that wherever they go, everything is subject to His authority. This is a good thing to remember: Everything is subject to Christ's authority. (Ritenbaugh)

Jesus stated directly that he had the authority to send. As the Lord for all, Jesus has the authority to give the marching orders. He has the jurisdiction, the power, the influence and the right to send.

Jesus then gave the command to go. "In the Greek text, Matthew 28:19 begins with a participle, literally, 'having gone.' But participles may sometimes be used in the imperative (command) sense (see Friberg, pp. 809, 810), hence, it is not improper to render the term as 'Go' in this passage. Christ thus admonished his men to go forth and 'make disciples.'" (Jackson). Jesus gives the command, the calling, to the disciples to go. This means that the gospel was not to be isolated and remain only among the Jews. The disciples were commanded to go.

In sending the disciples to go, Jesus also gave the specific command to make disciples. This is the primary directive. Going without making disciples is not following the call, the commission of Jesus. David Platt says, "To make disciples is to go to people who don't know the love of Christ and lead them to experience the life of Christ." (Platt). Disciple making is more than just leading people into believing in Jesus. It is teaching them how to follow Jesus with their whole life. Platt goes on to explain, "Disciple-making is not about sharing the gospel with people and then leaving them to figure out the Christian life on their own. Instead, we show them how to follow Christ on a day-by-day basis" (Platt). The calling is to enter into a relationship with others and guide them in their daily lives to learn, listen to, and obey Jesus in all aspects of their lives.

This calling is not limited but encompasses the whole world. Jesus said to go to the all nations. No one is to be excluded. The calling is to go to all people. John Piper writes, "Jesus commanded us to make disciples of all the peoples on this planet — the

whole planet (Matthew 28:19–20). This is the greatest challenge in the world. Let the emphasis fall on 'all the peoples'— Greek, *panta ta ethne* (all ethnic groups in the world)" (Piper).

The Jews understood that this was a change from their traditional way of thinking. As God's chosen people, they thought that they were special. They believed that they would continue to be set apart from all other nations. But Jesus opened this up to every people group. Mike Pettengill explains this by saying, "Jesus' earthly ministry took place in Israel. Now, His Bride is called to go outside Israel and disciple the whole world. The central focus for the disciples at the time Jesus spoke was to no longer focus only on Israel, but to include the Gentiles in their mission" (Pettengill). Jesus calling is to go to all people and make disciples. The calling is not limited to a specific people group but is extended to all people.

The Great Commission has the force of a command. It is not a suggestion that can be ignored by the committed disciple. "God's Great Commission should not be thought of as optional, but compulsory. Not every church is required to reach every nation, but every church must play a part in discipling the nations. The lost soul across the street will go to the same hell as the lost soul in the jungles of Africa" (Pettengill).

This understanding that this sending to go and make disciples of all nations is not optional should cause disciples to examine whether or not they are in obedience. Josef Urban writes:

> Can we really say we're fulfilling the Great Commission if we're not working to plant churches? At the very least, we should be working with already established churches in order to add to their number and to strengthen them in the faith. But

in the case that no such biblical churches are within the reach of the community

that is in need of evangelizing, then the only thing we have left to do is to plant

one. How can we say, as ministers of Christ, that we're really fulfilling the Great

Commission if we're not laboring to this end? (Urban)

Matthew 28:19–20 records Jesus sending the disciple out to make disciples which results

in planting new churches.

Mark 16:15

"He (Jesus) said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all

creation'" (Mark 16:15).

This verse seems to be a reiteration or restatement of the Great Commission from

Matthew 28:19–20. Mark records Jesus sending the disciples to go, preach the gospel, to

all the world. *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges* also equates this verse with

the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19. It says that these verses show the change from

Matthew 10:5-6, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans

enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" to "every creature [i.e.

to the whole creation], the whole world of men, not Jews only or Samaritans, but Gentiles

of all nations" (Steward).

Jesus sends the disciples out with the message of the gospel. By sending them out,

Jesus plans for the message to reach the whole earth. MacLaren's Expositions says:

The matter is literally left in our hands. Jesus has returned to the throne. Ere

departing He announces the distinct command. There it is, and it is age-long in its

application,- 'Preach!' that is the one gospel weapon. Tell of the name and the

work of 'God manifest in the flesh.' First 'evangelise,' then 'disciple the nations.'

Bring to Christ, then build up in Christ. There are no other orders. Let there be

boundless trust in the divine gospel, and it will vindicate itself in every mission-

field. (MacLaren).

The call to preach the gospel to the whole world continues today. Jesus continues to call

his people to mission.

The call to preach the gospel to all nations equates with the call to plant new

churches in all nations. Towns argues:

In the past, some have attempted to carry out the Great Commission by focusing

on individuals won to Christ through soul winning, street preaching, mass

meetings, and/or media evangelization. But today, many believe the correct

biblical methodology is church planting, which may include some of the above

methods… Therefore, many believe the most efficient way to preach the Gospel

to every person (Mark 16:15) and to make disciples in every ethnic culture (Matt.

28:18–19) is to plant a reproducing church that will multiply itself into all

cultures. (Towns)

Christian Fellowship Ministries has a strong focus on church planting and world

evangelism. They highlight this verse in their vision statement, "The vision of Christian

Fellowship Ministries is to fulfill Jesus' Great Commission in Mark 16:15 'Go into all the

world and preach the Gospel to every person.' To achieve this, the foundations of our

Fellowship can be summed up as: Changing Lives - Making Disciples - Reaching the

World."

This verse gives the call to go out and preach the gospel. This cannot be accomplished by staying within a person's comfort zone. Jesus sends people out to all areas. As the gospel is preached and disciples are made, churches must be planted.

Luke 24:46–48

"This is what is written: the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead the third day, and repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And look, I am sending you what My Father promised. As for you, stay in the city until you are empowered from on high" (Luke 24:46–48).

> This is the third iteration of the Great Commission. According to Coffman:
>
> This is a summary of the great commission which was probably given repeatedly during the forty days prior to the ascension. This announcement of it stressed the importance of the sufferings of the Saviour, and the great corollary of it, his resurrection from the tomb on the third day. "Unto all nations" is in the same vein of thought as "every creature" in Mark, and "all the nations," as in Matthew. (Coffman)

Luke records Jesus calling the disciples and sending them out to be his witnesses to the world.

The idea of beginning in Jerusalem is significant. The disciples were called to be witnesses beginning, but not ending in Jerusalem. Once again, they were being sent to the whole world. "Our Lord commands that his gospel should be preached among all nations, to the whole Gentile world; an event inconceivable to the Jews, and to human reason almost impossible" (Coke). Jacob Myers expands this understanding by saying, "We

must remember that the good news of Jesus Christ follows a centrifugal trajectory. It is universal in its scope and particular in its articulation. The Church today must remember that the blessings of God in Jesus Christ transcend racial, ethnic, gendered, and heteronormative prejudices. It is good news for everyone without exception." This is in essence sending the disciples out from Jerusalem into the whole world. "Jesus sent them out the same way the Father sent him to earth and demonstrated to them the incarnational character of their mission. He charged them to go and take the gospel to people, living out its power while teaching its emancipation truth found in Luke 24:46–48" (Ott 45).

The call and sending from Jesus extend to disciples today. Disciples are called to be his witnesses and sent to the world to share the gospels. Clin Barefoot writes:

> The reality that disciples are "sent" people is vital to properly understanding what it means to be a Christian. If we fail to understand that being "sent" is part of our identity in Christ, then we will inevitably fail to truly live out the gospel. But why is that? What is it that we are sent to do? Jesus says to his disciples in Luke 24:46–48…As disciples, we are sent as "witnesses" (Barefoot).

Luke 24:46–48 illustrates the call and sending to plant churches. Dave Early writes, "Church planting involves all the elements of the fulfilling of the Great Commission. Churches result from Christians invading a culture, preaching the gospel, baptizing believers, and training them to live for Christ" (5).

John 20:21

"Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you'" (John 20:21).

Just as each of the synoptic gospels shared a direct sending call, John shares a direct sending call. He says that he sends the disciples just as the Father sent him. A restating of the Great Commission exists in each of the gospels, and John's is no different. James Coffman likens this verse with the others. "So send I you ... This has all the force of the great commission."

As Jesus shared in Matthew that he had all authority, He sends out his disciples with authority. He says that he sends the disciples out just as the Father sent him and with the same purpose. "As I was sent to proclaim the truth of the Most High, and to convert sinners to God, I send you for the very same purpose, clothed with the very same authority, and influenced by the very same Spirit." (Clarke). This is again a commissioning and a sending of the disciples to build the kingdom. "But now the Lord ordains them to be his ambassadors, to establish his kingdom in the world. Let it therefore be held by us as an ascertained truth, that the Apostles were now, for the first time, appointed to be ordinary ministers of the Gospel." (Calvin).

This sending likewise is directed to disciples today. Disciples are sent to continue the mission of making disciples and growing the Kingdom of God. Ed Stetzer in *Planting Missional Churches* says, "we are sent in the same manner as Jesus—by the Father—to seek and save the lost. As Christ followers, this direction can't be clearer." (38).

Church planting is the means by which disciples are able to grow the Kingdom of God. Zane Pratt, Vice President of Training at the International Mission Board writes:

> Biblical discipleship only happens in the context of a local church. This need can be met, of course, by including a new believer in an existing church. However, among unreached people groups and in unreached places, there usually are no

existing churches. For this reason, on the front lines of the advance of the gospel,

the command to make disciples necessarily includes a requirement to plant

churches. (Pratt)

Christ sends disciples forth just as he was sent, with the purpose of seeking and saving

the lost. This mission is accomplished best through planting new churches. The

Minnesota United Methodist Church states, "God is a sending God, and Jesus has sent us

to plant churches. 'As the Father has sent me, I am sending you' (John 20:21) is just one

of many biblical texts that identify Christians as "sent people." … It is impossible to read

the New Testament or think of the history of the Christian movement without linking it to

the planting of new churches"

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be

my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"

(Acts 1:8)..

In his last statement before the ascension, Jesus again sends his disciples out to be

his witnesses to the whole world. Jesus never wavered in the presentation of the clear call

to go and be witnesses, to go and make disciples, and to go to the whole world. Jesus'

words to the disciples here basically form the outline for the book of Acts. "This order of

apostolic preaching and success supplies the proper key to the plan of the Acts, which

relates first the progress of the Gospel 'in Jerusalem, and all Judea and Samaria' (the first

through ninth chapters), and then 'unto the uttermost part of the earth' (the tenth through

twenty-eighth chapters)" (Jamieson).

These words again are a commissioning of the disciples. Jesus is very clear that the call is for his disciples to not sit on the Gospel but to take the Good News everywhere. The message was not for the Jews alone. They were commissioned to reach the entire world. "By the terms in the text we may see the extent to which this commission of instruction and salvation was designed to reach: to the Jews; to the Samaritans, and the uttermost part of the earth, i.e. to the Gentile nations, thus, to the whole human race the Gospel of the kingdom was to be proclaimed." (Clarke).

This call extends to disciples today to reach new people for the kingdom by planting new churches. "The Great Commission is a church planting call. Acts 1:8 is a command to plant churches to the ends of the earth" (Medders). This verse shows that disciples today are called to go everywhere with the Gospel and plant new churches for these new believers. "The missionary agenda of the Acts missional movement comes from a missionary God in Acts 1:8 but the template of reproduction was already spelt out in Matthew 28:16-20 [missional discipleship]" (Moyo).

Acts Community Church of Deer Park, Texas has embraced the call to reach the world through church planting. As a core value, ACC states that,

"Matthew 28:19–20 & Acts 1:8 are very clear commands from Christ to be a witness to all people and make disciples of all people. Acts Community Church believes the best way to reach our communities, cities, nation, and the ends of the earth is planting churches that plant churches. In the book of Acts the Gospel spread through planting churches that planted churches. We are committed to equipping our people and raising up our best leaders to be sent out to plant churches that will plant churches" (Acts Community Church).

Jesus's call to make disciples takes people out of their comfort zone. Even though Jesus calls disciples to start in their back yard, they are not to stop there. The call is to go to all the world, whatever it looks like.

"It is important to note that these mission fields do not necessarily have to be defined in terms of geography. For instance, Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth may also be interpreted ethnically, linguistically, and culturally. One church, for example, defined their Judea as 'people with whom we feel Comfortable' and their Samaria as 'people with whom we do not normally interact.' In addition, a church may have very real opportunities to make an international impact in their own community or region. Wherever your church finds these fields, God wants you to have a kingdom influence in the hearts and lives of all people." (*Embracing* 7).

Acts 13:1–3

"Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off" (Acts 13:1–3).

These verses reveal how the early church responded to the call to go and make disciples. At first, the church grew predominately in Jerusalem. In order to fully respond to the Great Commission as Jesus laid out, it was necessary to send others. "It was from

Antioch that teachers were first sent forth with the definite purpose of spreading

Christianity, and organizing churches, with regular institutions" (Jamieson).

These teachers were sent purposefully. It was not merely a plea for volunteers or

selection drafted to fill the need. These teachers were called by the Holy Spirit. Steven

Cole writes:

G. Campbell Morgan notes that the central feature of these verses is "the declared

activity of the Spirit of God." The Holy Spirit speaks, and He does not give

suggestions, but orders: "Set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I

have called them.". . . The idea of world missions originates with God, not with

men. These leaders weren't brainstorming on how to pep up their church program

when one of them said, "I know what we should do! Let's send out some

missionaries!" Rather, the Holy Spirit broke in and told them what to do. (Cole).

As the Holy Spirit directed Paul and Barnabas to be set apart, they were

confirmed by the church. The Theology of Work team writes:

"Acts 13:1–3 shows the Christian community trying to discern how the Spirit is

leading them toward witness. Paul and Barnabas are singled out to work as

traveling evangelists and healers. What is remarkable is that this discernment is

accomplished communally. The Christian community, rather than the individual,

is best able to discern the vocations of its individual members." ("Vocation")

This calling and confirmation are the standard for church planters today as well. The

Great Commission is still in effect. The Holy Spirit still calls church planters, and the

church is to confirm and send out church planters. "The main business of the church is to

obey the Holy Spirit in promoting God's glory among the nations by sending out workers called by God to preach the gospel" (Cole).

A review of the biblical literature reveals that God is a sending God. He continually sends people out to share His message of redemption. Jesus continued in this vein, to send out disciples, not only to the Jewish people but to the Gentiles as well. The call is to go and make disciples. That is accomplished through planting new churches. Disciples are to respond by going or sending church planters to the whole world. As John Piper puts it, "There are only three possibilities in life: to be a goer, a sender, or disobedient" (qtd. in Wood).

Theological Foundations

Three specific areas of theology are important to consider when looking at church planting and the church planter. They are Christology, Missiology and Ecclesiology. Gene Wilson writes, "Biblical church planting comes from sound Christology, ecclesiology and missiology. The applications and strategies are many but the universal principles are limited" (6). Christology focuses on who Jesus is and what the Gospel is. Ecclesiology informs the understanding of the church. Missiology centers around the mission or the purpose of God and His people. This section will review literature as it pertains to church planting and the church planter.

Christology

In Mark 8:29, Jesus asked the question, "Who do you say I am?" That is the essence of Christology. Having a sound Christology is the starting point for church planting. Michael Frost says it is important to begin with Christology. "We were asking church leaders to suspend their predetermined models of how to do church and to begin

with Jesus. We were arguing that we all need to learn Christ, and to locate our sense of being sent into the world in the story of Christ, not only to be mobilized by his sending words, but to model ourselves after his example as a sent one." (Frost).

"Christology relates to many areas of theology, but most important is its place in the life of the believer. Recognizing who Jesus is, what he did and why — these are essential to knowing him. Only then may someone believe in Jesus and have eternal life (John 3:11–21)" (Neese). If a church planter fails to start with a solid Christology, then the planter is in danger of misrepresenting who Christ is and what he has done. Without a true picture of these, one cannot truly move on to key doctrines of the trinity, incarnation, salvation, or resurrection. Without an understanding of who Jesus is, one cannot formulate a plan of discipleship—following Jesus. Without an understanding of Jesus, one cannot be sure of what kind of church they will be planting. Damian Emetuche notes that "…the early church never went out to expressly plant a church but proclaimed Jesus Christ" (4).

Missiology

Missiology is the study of missions. It is important to the church planter since the call to church planting is a call to join in God's mission. Eddie Arthur writes in his article "Missio Dei and the Mission of the Church," "Missio Dei is a Latin theological term that can be translated as 'Mission of God,' it refers to the work of the church as being part of God's work." Joining in the call to plant churches is joining is the mission of God.

Ed Stetzer writes in "Church Planting and the Mission of God," "How does church planting relate to the mission of God? The mission of God is bigger than church planting, but it certainly includes church planting. Why? You can't love Jesus and despise

His wife. The church is the bride of Christ, and if you love the work of Christ you love the church" (Stetzer). The church planter is choosing to engage in the mission of God in planting new churches. The church is indeed the bride of Christ and is the vehicle He uses to reach out to the world with His mission.

"Church planting involves taking part in what God has always been doing, and getting a foretaste of where history is headed" (Merida). Church planting is working with God to fulfill his purpose in drawing people to himself. The Mission of God is what should move the planter to join in the work of planting a new church. It is reaching out to individuals and inviting them into community with the God's people. Eddie Arthur believes that the purpose of the church is found in mission as he writes,

> "The call to conversion is a call to become part of a community, the Church, and comes from that community…Both the church and the mission of the church are tools of God, instruments through which God carries out this mission…Mission is thereby seen as a movement from God to the world. The church is viewed as an instrument for that mission. In this view, the whole purpose of the Church is to support the Mission Dei and church structures exist in order to serve the community in mission." (Arthur).

"Missiology is accomplished at the intersection of gospel, culture, and the church" (Stetzer, "What Is A Missiologist?"). A church planter enters into culture to plant a new church for the sake of the gospel. The church planter engages in the mission of God.

Ecclesiology

Ecclesiology is basically the study of the church and the purpose of the church. "Ecclesiology is essential for all Christians as it guides us toward a biblical understanding of how Christians relate to one another, to God, and to unbelievers. A firm understanding of ecclesiology benefits us personally as we learn how to help provide healthy church growth and honor God" (Compelling Truth).

Of course, the understanding of church is essential for church planters. It is within the context of church that planters engage in the mission of God. "Ecclesiology should inform, instruct, and even excite the mission of planting churches to the glory of God. In other words: church planter, you need a robust ecclesiology that's in place well before you start trying to plant a church" (Compelling Truth).

Planters engage in the mission of God by making disciples and by planting churches. When you make disciples, you will have a church. Pratt writes:

Biblical discipleship only happens in the context of a local church. This need can be met, of course, by including a new believer in an existing church. However, among unreached people groups and in unreached places, there usually are no existing churches. For this reason, on the front lines of the advance of the gospel, the command to make disciples necessarily includes a requirement to plant churches.

The church planter is called to make disciples and that is accomplished through the mission of planting new churches.

While the form of a church plant may look different, the function of the church is constant. "While studying various methodologies can answer the how? of church planting, it is our ecclesiology that answers the why?...the church that carries out the

work of missions is a local body, or the local body as an institution, representing all local

bodies collectively" (Cox). The mission of God, carried out by the church planter,

happens in the context of the church.

When a church planter answers the call of God, the planter fulfills God's purpose

through planting the new church. James Renihan argues that:

> God's purpose for the church is that it be a society full of people who are like
>
> their Savior, and this must be the church planter's goal. He must strive to see
>
> growing conformity to Christ in every area of life. We must train Christians to be
>
> Christians: good husbands and wives and parents, good citizens, good workers, all
>
> by faith resisting the devil. Church planters must make this a priority—bringing
>
> converts to a growing maturity.

This is the importance of ecclesiology in church planting.

Priority of Theology

Each of these areas of theology is important in church planning. Different authors

give different priority to these areas. Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch place first

importance on Christology. "Our Christology informs our missiology, which in turn

determines our ecclesiology. If we get this the wrong way around and allow our notions

of the church to qualify our sense of purpose and mission, we can never be disciples of

Jesus, and we will never be an authentic missional church" (Hirsch 209). They are very

insistent on getting this priority correct for church planters and for missional churches.

"In proposing the formula that Christology should shape missiology, which in turn should

shape our ecclesiology, we were trying to subvert that whole system. We were asking

church leaders to suspend their predetermined models of how to do church and to begin with Jesus" (Frost).

Hirsch believes that everything must begin with Jesus. He writes:

What it meant here is that the person and work of Jesus must directly inform our purpose and function – our mission in the world. And it is our mission that in turn must inform our cultural form of the church. To align ourselves correctly, we first need to return our attention to Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, and recalibrate our approach from that point. Jesus is our constant reference point. (Hirsch 92)

In following this view, a church planter will always start with Jesus and that informs everything the planter does.

Not all agree with this outlook. Darryl Dash thinks it is an overstatement to emphasize this line of thinking. He focuses first on Ecclesiology. "Ecclesiology Is Important. If I were to charge western Christianity with a fault, it would be that our ecclesiology is too weak. We don't need to deemphasize the church; we need to understand it better, and allow that to inform our practices, including our mission" (Dash).

Nathan Knight agrees with Dash. He says, "Ecclesiology can't be assumed nor should it be considered a distraction to the church planter's "mission." It also can't be a kind of add-on that you insert here and there as you have need" (Knight). They both see ecclesiology as being too important to put last in priority. In this view, church planters would focus on the church and the community of believers first. When planting Restoration Church in Washington, D.C., Knight said, "A clear ecclesiology on the front

end defined our orientation for church planting. It directed us, encouraged us, and kept us focused on God's plan for his people. The work was hard, and it continues to be. But we've never regretted wielding the sword of God's Word in the difficult work of planting churches" (Knight).

While attempting to prioritize these theological areas, it seems that many fail to stress the importance of each. Frost saw this trend, noting:

> Ed Stetzer and David Putnam, in their book, *Breaking the Missional Code*, agreed with the formula in general, but cautioned that we usually find ourselves at the intersection of three things, rather than engaging them chronologically: "…we have the intersection of who Jesus is and what has he sent us to do (Christology); the forms and strategies we use to most effectively expand the kingdom where we are sent (Missiology); and the expression of a New Testament church that is most appropriate in this context (Ecclesiology)." That's fair. Christology, missiology, and ecclesiology will always inform each other to some degree. (Frost)

Perhaps a better way of looking at this is not in a linear progression but in a circular model. Christians must have a strong Christology and understand that everything is subject to Jesus and their clear understanding of him. Believers are on mission to share their understanding of Christ with others that they might follow him as well. All of this happens inside the context of the church, and there is no discipleship (following Christ) outside of the church. This reinforces the importance of Christ in all things. This is the call of each church planter.

Characteristics of Church Planters

Although the call to make disciples is for all followers of Christ, the call to plant new churches is specific. Current experts in the field agree that there are certain characteristics that are necessary for church planters to be effective. Although the lists have many similarities, different experts and church planting agencies have developed their own specified qualifications for planters.

Dr. Charles Ridley

Charles Ridley is considered a pioneer in assessing potential church planters. Ridley provides extensive training for interviewing prospective church planters. He believes focusing on past behaviors is the only accurate predictor of future behavior and success for a church planter. In his manual, Ridley explains 13 qualities that he considers crucial for church planters. He calls it the Church Planter Performance Profile (CPPP) (Ridley 92-96).

1. Visionizing Capacity – Ridley calls this the carpenter. The key is to be able to see the possibilities of the future and persuasively share that vision with others.

2. Personal Motivation – Ridley calls this the energizer bunny. The key here is to have great persistence to the call of God with a commitment to excellence. It is being in it for the long haul.

3. Creating Ownership of Ministry – Ridley calls this the ability to pass the baton. The key is to give away ministry. It is transferring the vision to others and for them to completely buy in and share responsibility for the growth of the church.

4. Reaching the Unchurched – Ridley calls this the Fisherman. The key is to demonstrate the ability to effectively engage in outreach and evangelism. It is

understanding the unchurched and actively communicating Christ to the unchurched in a manner that is easily understood.

5. Spousal Cooperation – Ridley calls this Teammates in Marriage and Ministry. The key is recognizing the impact of church planting on the family dynamics and joining together in partnership. It is modeling wholeness as a family as well as establishing healthy boundaries for the family.

6. Relationship Building – Ridley calls this People Engagers. It involves taking the initiative to establish and deepen relationships with others. The key is getting to know people on a personal level and responding to them with God's love and compassion.

7. Commitment to Church Growth – Ridley calls this having a Growth Mindset. The key is believing in church growth as a theological principle. It is important to see the lack of growth as decline and seeking to see the Kingdom of God grow.

8. Responsiveness to Community – Ridley calls this Contextualization of Ministry. The key is seeing the unique culture that you are ministering in and responding to the culture. It is not merely trying to address the culture but understanding the pulse of the culture and responding with what the church has to offer.

9. Utilizes Giftedness of Others – Ridley calls this Releasing Spiritual Gifts. The key is equipping others and fanning into flame their spiritual giftedness. It is avoiding the temptation to do it all and releasing others into ministry.

10. Flexibility & Adaptability – Ridley calls this Adapting. The key is dealing with the changing demands and adapting to different situations. It means doing whatever it takes whenever it is necessary.

11. Building Group Cohesiveness – Ridley calls this the Gluemaker. The key is building people up to work together as a group. It includes the ability to maintain morale and to effectively deal with conflict.

12. Resilience – Ridley calls this Bounce-backability. The key is effectively dealing with setbacks, losses and disappointments. It is the ability to rebound and not be defeated by the ups and downs of ministry life.

13. Exercising Faith – Ridley call this Faith in Action. The key is believing in God's call and action. It is living in expectation and hope with a strong conviction to the ministry.

Ridley says having a strong behavioral background in these categories are essential in being effective as a church planter. He would rate a person who scores low in these categories as a poor risk for effective church planting.

Nelson Searcy

Searcy is the church planter/pastor of The Journey in New York City and has served as a teacher for church planting at Rick Warren's Saddleback Church Conferences in California. In his article Searcy said, "..starting a new church is a heroic venture and, if God has called you to it, there's nothing else like it." His article is entitled "9 Characteristics of a Church Planter." Below is his list of the necessary traits of a church planter:

1. Must Complement Vision by Working toward Goals, Setting Up Accountability and Maintaining Discipline. Searcy says, "Church Planter, you must be able to set goals and work toward achieving them, hold yourself accountable (and enlist

others to help you do so) and demonstrate the discipline to stay focused on doing the little things to pursue that vision in the midst of challenges and pressure from all sides."

2. Must be Willing to Change without Losing Determination. Searcy says, "Show me a church planter who has never failed and I'll show you one who has never taken a risk. The key to long term effectiveness is "failing forward."

3. Must Understand and Embrace True Creativity. Searcy says, "True creativity is essential to success in church planting. Inflexibility has been the downfall of many a new church."

4. Must Display Confidence and Optimism about the Task at Hand. Searcy says, "I am constantly amazed by how many church planters (and pastors) I meet who are pessimistic and insecure. It makes me wonder who they're working for."

5. Must be Diligent. Searcy says, "You need to develop the persistence to keep doing the right things and calling out to God to do what only He can do. The breakthroughs that follow these periods are some of the greatest joys of starting a new church. And you'll only experience them if you're persistent."

6. Must be a Voracious Learner. Searcy says, "In all of the hustle and bustle of starting a new church, one of the 'easiest' ways to save a little time is to cut down on your reading and training opportunities. This is a move that will come back to bite you sooner than you realize."

7. Must be Motivated and Driven to Succeed. Searcy says, "Once you've clarified your call, you can harness that as motivation to do whatever it takes to make this new church a success."

8. Must be Willing to Embrace the "Inner Entrepreneur." Searcy says, "One of the reasons that church planting has had such an abysmal failure rate is that it requires a different skillset than most other areas of ministry… if you're not a self-starter, your church planting experience is likely to be unpleasant (and brief)."

9. Must be Enthusiastic about this New Church. Searcy says, "There is no excuse not to be passionate about what you're doing. This isn't about a certain type of personality so much as it is about enjoying the work to which God has called you." Be passionate about your city. Be passionate about the people God has called you to reach. And beyond all that, be passionate about doing whatever it takes to introduce people to Jesus!

Acts 29

Acts 29 is a church planting network that lists its sole purpose as to "Encourage, resource, facilitate, support and equip churches to plant churches that will plant church-planting churches!" (Acts29.com). To that end, Acts 29 has complied this list of 10 Qualifications of a Church Planter (Acts29.com).

1. Spiritual Vitality. "The gospel must be evidently at work in every area of a church planter's life: personally, maritally, domestically, sexually, financially, physically, relationally and ministerially. We are sinners who need forgiveness through repentance and confession. We have to practice this daily as examples of the gospel." To be effective as a church planter, they state that a person must have a life filled with spiritual integrity and a trust in the truth of the gospel.

2. Theological Clarity. This is seen in a person's ability to "learn, grasp and communicate theological concepts." While the planter is clear on their own theological position, the planter must demonstrate grace to those with differing views.

3. Clarity and Strength of Calling. The planter must have a clear call to plant and have the support of the spouse. "A calling is necessary in a church plant to face the tough times because a hireling leaves when the wolf arrives. But a called shepherd stays with his flock through adversity."

4. Strong Marriage and Family Life. Acts 29 looks for a church planter who "Exhibits a healthy marriage …and demonstrates integrity and stewardship in managing finances.

5. Relationship Building. It is important for a church planter to meet new people, establish relationships, and build strong teams.

6. Leadership Abilities. Acts 29 says an effective church planter "has a clear and reproducible system for leadership development, has shown he is able to accomplish tasks with limited resources and has the ability to raise up men to become leaders in church, home, business, community."

7. Emotional Maturity. The Acts 29 stance says, "An emotionally mature church planter can receive critique and feedback with grace." They look for a person who leads confidently without arrogance and willingly looks for accountability from others.

8. Missional Lifestyle. An effective planter will be committed to reaching out to the unchurched in such a way that they will be easily understood. The planter will be a cultural fit to the area and will exhibit a commitment and a passion to reach their community.

9. Disciple-Making Skills. The church planter will be effective through discipleship. With a clear plan for making disciples who make disciples, the planter will be "skilled in establishing and multiplying gospel communities (discipleship, missional small groups, learning teams, etc.)" and guide others to spiritual maturity.

10. Entrepreneurial Aptitude. This includes a track record of starting new things. An effective church planter must be a self-starter who has the ability to cast an innovative and strategic vision.

Ed Stetzer

Ed Stetzer is regarded as an expert in missiology and church planting. He holds the Billy Graham Chair of Church, Mission, and Evangelism at Wheaton College and serves as Executive Director of the Billy Graham Center. Stetzer is also a church planter. While he recognizes and supports Ridley's 13 characteristics of a church planter, he also adds 6 indicators of someone who may be called to church planting (*Planting Missional Churches* 47–49). Here are his indicators:

1. Pattern of Ministry Initiation – Stetzer believes that a church should not be the first thing a person starts. Rather, the church planter should have a track record of starting things. "Is there a consistent flow of 'launch' in your ministry life? Starting other ministries can help you figure out if God wants you to plant a church" (47). A pattern of starting is important to determine if a planter is called to start a new church.

2. Pattern of Ministry Multiplication – Ministry multiplication is not about just starting things; it includes training others and handing ministry off to them. "If you have a pattern of connecting people to ministry roles and then releasing them to grow into those roles, then you have a key characteristic essential in church planting" (48).

3. Personal Wiring – "God has built church planters a little differently" (48). Planters have a constant desire to start new. They have a calmness in the storm but are restless when things are calm.

4. Holy Dissatisfaction – This is not being satisfied with the status quo in the church. It is not standing against the church but desiring to see the church grow and expand in new ways. Stetzer warns, "I want to be careful to say we are looking for holy dissatisfaction and not general dissatisfaction" (48).

5. Family Commitment – The planter's family should be on board with the call. "God will not lead you to plant a church if it means you have to leave your spouse and kids" (49). God calls people to first disciple and lead their own family before calling them to plant a church.

6. Church Affirmation – The endorsement of the church confirms that call on a planter. The church can recognize that consistency of the other five traits and be an incredible encouragement and support to the planter. "Church affirmation is biblical and can be one of your greatest indicators and components" (49).

Although these indicators have different wordings, they lead to the same conclusion. Church planters are called by God and have recognizable traits that distinguish them from church pastors. These traits are seen in the regular behaviors of the planters. It is important for the planter to have support of their family and the blessing of their church. Recognizing and submitting to the leadership of the church gives a clear picture of the humility that is necessary and the support that is essential in planting.

Contemporary Strategies for Finding and Funding Church Planters

Finding

As a Church planting network or movement develops, one of the potential concerns is where to find the next church planter. Ed Stetzer says it would be nice if there were a "Church Planter Depot" where you could find the right person for the job ("5 Places to Find Your Next Church Planter"). Of course, that place does not exist. God is still calling church planters, but there are more networks and denominations looking for the next church planter. Recruiting has become more difficult. The Wabash Valley LEAD Team of the Missionary Church had developed a vision for a new church plant, but it looked for a planter for three years before finding the planter for that mission. In Matthew 9:37 (NIV) Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." Where are church planters found?

Ed Stetzer wrote an article addressing this issue entitled "5 Places to Find Your Next Church Planter" (Stetzer). Here are the five key places he mentions.

First, he talks about students that are in school for ministry now. Recruiting on campuses ensures that the potential planter is seeking to have a solid theological foundation and is interested in pursuing ministry. Most college and seminaries have at least a discussion about church planting if not a specific course or educational track. Making use of the existing schools for recruiting is important.

Then he suggests connecting with Ethnic Networks. This entails stepping outside of the current context a person is serving in and seeking to invest in another culture or ethnicity to become a planter.

Next, Stetzer addresses Youth Pastors. Anecdotal evidence shows that many youth pastors may be willing to take the step to become church planters if given the permission and encouragement to investigate the possibility.

Stetzer continues looking further into the church ministry ranks and points out that Associate Pastors could be the next source for finding recruits to plant churches. As associates work in the church, they learn many things about organizing ministry and dealing with conflicts. Stetzer suggests that this may be a strong pool.

And finally, Stetzer points to Church planting conferences like Exponential. Those who have an interest in church planning will often go to events to learn about planting and gather with like-minded people. The largest concentration of planters and potential planters in one spot at one time is most likely at a conference, although competition to recruit planters is present as well.

The Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) believes recruiting church planters is important. Ted Powers, Church Planting Director of Mission to North America (MNA) said, "Recruiting is clearly the most important factor in planting new churches" (qtd. in Foster). To facilitate their recruiting efforts, they have brought on Alan Foster as the MNA Church Planter Recruiting Director. The goal was for PCA to have someone dedicated full time to finding church planters. His strategy is to seek out planters from those currently involved in ministry while trying to develop potential church planters as well (Foster).

Ecclesia Network is devoted to multiplying churches and movements. One of the ways they have addressed church planter recruitment is to build residency programs. Bob Hyatt says, "As a network, Ecclesia desires to partner with, equip and multiply missional communities. One of the ways we're doing that is the development of a residency program in partnership with a number of 'hub churches' within the network." In the residency, they address issues of call, characteristics, leadership, and training necessary

to be a church planter. The residency is a minimum of one year with the desire to plant a church following the residency.

In the article "Recruiting Leaders for a Church Planting Movement," Steve Ogne is credited with saying recruiting is not a long-term solution…that effective leadership development systems begin with the lost community. Pastoral leaders have the responsibility to raise up the next generation of pastors, church planters and missionaries from within their context (Goodmanson).

This is an approach to recruiting that Ralph Moore and Jeff Christopherson agree with. In their book *New To 5ive*, they advocate raising up the next generation of church planters through the discipleship work of the church and missional communities. Christopherson writes, "For too many years, the most frequency question the majority of church-panting leaders have asked has been, 'Where can we find a solid church planter?' But the pool of pre-equipped and field-ready church planters has been well over-fished, and far too few seem to be concerned with the task of restocking the pond" (104). Instead they advocate training the planter through discipleship from the mission field. They write, "By incorporating a church-planting pipeline into your discipleship pathway, you'll have pre-prepared an indigenous pool of leaders who are spiritually, culturally, relationally and economically prepared to advance a movement" (104).

The literature points out many different avenues for finding church planters, but it seems to agree upon the importance of having a called church planter. Bill Hogg adds in his article "Is There a Recruitment Secret Sauce for Church Planting?" another crucial point of emphasis on recruiting a church planter. It is the emphasis on prayer. Hogg says, "We don't recruit, coax, cajole or tap prospective planters on the shoulder – we pray." He

reminds readers that Jesus said in Luke 10.2, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." Prayer is the essential secret sauce not only for recruiting a church planter but for church planting as a whole.

Funding

Another important part of church planting is funding the planter. The strategy for funding a church plant affects the strategy for the church plant.

Chris Ridgeway of Acts 29 talks about church planters in an article entitled "Four Models of Fundraising: Money & Mission in Church Planting." As the title suggests, he outlines four different models of fundraising a church planter might adopt.

1. The Fund Drive Model – Ridgeway calls this the Boy Scout Model. It involves selling product like candy or car washes to fund the plant. He believes this can build awareness of the new church plant but comes at a price. It involves a lot of group participation and often has a low return of investment. It can also distract from the call of the gospel with the product or gift involved.

2. The Large Donor Campaign Model – Ridgeway calls this the Shark Tank Model. The goal is to recruit an individual to donate a large sum of money to the project. When successful, this can fast-track the plant. The distraction can be investors placing expectations and time limits on the funding.

3. The Bi-Vocational Model – Ridgeway calls it Quad-Vocational. It requires church planters to also be in the marketplace, to have work on the side to pay for ministry work. This can help build relationships in the community, but not all jobs are well suited

to this model. The planter can also feel the pull and demands from the job, the ministry,

the community, and family. That is why Ridgeway uses the term Quad-Vocational.

4. The Missionary Support Model – Ridgeway calls this the Campus Crusade

Model. The planter recruits many small amount donors to fund the mission. This can help

develop very good, stable support but takes a lot of time and energy to establish.

In his article, "Church Plant Funding: How Does It Work?" Ed Stetzer advocates

a model that he gleaned from a denominational plant for funding. In this plan, the planter

is responsible to raise the first 25% of the funding necessary for the plant. "If a church

planter can't raise funds, the planter probably can't plant a church" (Stetzer).

The second 25% is to come from a sponsoring church. Having a sponsoring

church increased the focus and emotional investment and involvement with the new

church plant.

The third 25% is to come from the region or district. This plan also provides

training and accountability. "The regional leaders needed to have input into the church

plant and into the planter, his plan, vision, and strategy. They would be providing

assessment, coaching, training, and they should be willing to invest financially" (Stetzer).

And the final 25% would come from the denomination's national fund. This

shows connectedness and support from the governing church structure.

In contrast, David Fitch argues to radically change funding in his article, "Why

We Should Stop Funding Church Plants." He believes that traditional models are overly

expensive and place great pressure on the plant to not seek the lost but to find those who

are already are in touch with the gospel and are prepared to tithe early on. Instead he

suggests a model of sending a team of multiple leaders who will serve bi-vocationally, investing 15 hours a week into the plant. He claims in this manner the church will be "'self-sustaining' in that they all have jobs, so they're maintaining a common life together, but the new expectation is that they will be committed to this context/neighborhood for ten years" (Fitch). This, he argues, will allow the planters to know their community better and will allow the church to be a better place to bring new believers into discipleship.

Ralph Moore also supports a bi-vocational model of church planting. He writes, "We have seen how liberating our personal finances from the church's resources can immediately broaden horizons, both for you and your church" (128). He believes that a bi-vocational model is more likely to lead to multiplication at a faster rate. Moore also sees another benefit, "I will say that surviving and thriving will require bi-vocational leaders who possess (or quickly learn) excellent delegation skills…and leaders with exceptional abilities to train and delegate are more apt to pastor a larger congregation that may be able to provide 100 percent of their financial support" (128–29).

There are many different models of funding for the church planter. Finding funding will require time and energy from the planter, whether it is raising funds or working bi-vocationally. The funding model will impact the strategy of the plant and the time of the planter.

<div align="center">**Research Design Literature**</div>

This is a qualitative research project. "Qualitative researchers are interested in how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam 5). To understand the effectiveness

of church planter recruiting and funding practices, it was important to interview church planting network leaders to see how they interpreted the recruiting and funding models they have used and how they determined the effectiveness of those practices. It was also important to survey recent church planters to determine if their experiences with these practices aligned with the meanings the network leaders assigned to the practices.

This study is also a pre-intervention project. "Qualitative research . . . seeks to make sense of lived experience" (Sensing 57). The goal of this project is to make sense out of the combined lived experiences of these network leaders and recent church planters. The completed project then can make a recommendation of recruiting and funding methods that new church planting networks might adopt to maximize effectiveness. The researcher also plans to implement the findings in a new church planting network.

Summary of Literature

The Old Testament shows that God has always been a sending God. He sent Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiple. They were sent forth in the image of God (Imago Dei) and to embrace the Mission of God (Missio Dei).

Abram was sent out to step away from his comfortable surroundings and engage in the mission that God had laid out for him. He was to go to a new area and to increase the kingdom of God. The blessing that Abraham was given for his obedience led to the whole world being blessed.

Isaiah highlights the fact that God calls and sends individuals to bring his message to the masses. The message of God is to be given as God gave it. The servant of God recognizes that he has no righteousness of his own and is dependent upon God. In

response, the servant of God is available to go wherever God sends with the message of God for the glory of God.

Jeremiah illustrates that God had designs on the community. God's people are to be salt and light to their community. They bring peace and prosperity to the community through their service to God and their engagement in the community.

Jonah leads readers to recognize that the call of God is not to be ignored. Even though he was a reluctant prophet, he shared the message of God exactly as it was given to him. When he shared the world of God, the people were moved to repentance and experienced the grace of God. Jonah was ill-disposed to the people God called him to serve. Imagine the difference for both Jonah and the people if Jonah had been positively disposed towards the people.

From the Old Testament, church planters gain a historical perspective of the call of God. God calls individuals and puts them to mission. The mission is not for the glory of the person but for the glory of God. The mission of God is to grow the kingdom of God. The planter accepts the call of God and goes where God leads. God moves the planter into a community where the planter engages the community for the welfare of the community. The message of God leads the community to repentance and restoration to God.

In the Gospels of the New Testament, there is a continued restatement of the Great Commission to go, to make disciples, and to teach obedience. Although it is restated in various ways, the message remains. God calls disciples to go and make disciples. As disciples are made, churches are planted. The call of God to make disciples equates to the call of God to plant churches.

In Acts that the marching orders are given, and the church responds. Either a church is going, sending, or being disobedient. The example of Barnabas and Saul reveals that the Holy Spirit calls church planters to the work of going and making disciples and the church affirms the call on their lives, prays for them, and sends them out.

Likewise, church planters are called by the Holy Spirit to live out the Great Commission in every community around the world, to every people group and ethnicity. The church is to recognize, affirm, pray for, send off, and support these church planters.

Christology, Missiology, and Ecclesiology are essential elements of theology for church planting. These three schools inform each other and strengthen the theology of church planting. Christ is the center of all the planter (and Christian) does. It is who He is that guides the lives of church planters. That puts the planter (and Christian) on mission for God. The mission of God is a response to the impact of Christ on the life of a disciple. The ability to truly make disciples requires believers to be in community. It is oxymoronic to think of a Christian separate from the Church. The Church is the Bride of Christ, and Christ is the head. The church is to be focused on serving Christ because of who He is, which is Ecclesiology feeding back into Christology and Missiology. The church planter needs a clear understanding of who Christ is, what Christ has called the planter to do, and what the church looks like in response.

The call of the church planters requires that the church recognizes what a church planter is, the characteristics of the planter, as well as how to find and fund a church planter.

All of these issues lead into the question of the best practices for a new church planting network. The rest of this project will seek out the different methods used by

contemporary denominations and networks, as well as investigate the impact these

different models have on the church and the planters. As a result of this research, this

study will be able to determine the best practices for a new network to follow.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

This chapter examines the research methods that were used for this ministry

transformation project. It addresses why it is profitable to research the different methods

of recruiting and funding church planters and the impact those methods have on planters.

It outlines how the research was conducted for this project. It covers the specific research

questions and why that information is needed. The different research methods will be

highlighted and described.

Next, this chapter will discuss the specific ministry setting for recruiting and

funding church planters. The reason for selection of the different networks will be shared

along with the general characteristic of each participant. Also, it will address how this

research will be safeguarded for confidentiality.

Finally, this chapter will detail the step-by-step procedures used to fulfill the

purpose of the project. It will present the reliability of the research, how the data was

collected, and how the data was analyzed.

Nature and Purpose of the Project

Church planting is an important and essential way to fulfill the Great Commission

and grow God's kingdom today. Otherwise, the church will see a steady decline. Ed

Stetzer says, "In order to merely break even in membership growth, we need a church

plant growth rate of about 3 percent per year. To put it into perspective, at 100 churches,

there needs to be three new churches per year" (Stetzer, "More Church Planting—Not

Less—Is Needed"). In order to accomplish this, more church planters will need to be

recruited and funded. This project looks at five different church planting networks and how they find and fund church planters. The purpose of this research was to discover and evaluate the recruiting and funding practices of church planters in church planting networks in order to develop the best methods for the Crossroads Church Planting Network.

<div align="center">

Research Questions

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In order to find the best practice for finding and funding church planters in church planting networks, three research questions were used to guide the research.

RQ #1. What do church planting network leaders and church planters indicate are the best ways to recruit and fund church planters?

The purpose of this research question is to ascertain what the methods are to recruit and fund church planters. Church planting networks employ different methods to find or attract church planters to their network. Church planters respond to these different methods to sign on as church planters. Related to the recruitment practices are the ways that networks fund church planters. Again, church planters may respond to a church planting network because of the way they fund their church planters. In order to collect data for this question, a seven-question questionnaire with a follow-up interview was designed for network leaders and a 21 question survey was designed for church planters. For the network leaders, questionnaire questions 1 and 2 addressed recruiting church planters and questions 3 and 4 dealt with funding church planters. For church planters, survey questions 6–11 addressed recruiting while questions 12–18 addressed funding.

RQ #2. What do church planting network leaders and church planters indicate are barriers to recruiting and funding church planters?

The purpose of this research question is to determine what problems or struggles occurred in recruiting and funding church planters. In order to collect data for this question, a seven-question questionnaire with a follow-up interview was designed for network leaders and a 21 question survey was designed for church planters. For the network leaders, questionnaire questions 5 and 6 dealt with barriers to recruiting and funding church planters. For church planters, survey questions 11–15 address the struggles planters experienced with the recruiting and funding process.

RQ #3. What are best practices moving forward for recruiting and funding church planters?

The purpose of this research question is to have network leaders share their ideas and plans for recruiting and funding church planters in the future. Question 7 on the questionnaire for network leaders focuses on this area. Questions 19–21 on the survey focused on the satisfaction level of the church planters. This provided information from the planters as pertaining to the practices that produced the most satisfaction.

<p align="center">**Ministry Context**</p>

There is a resurgence of church planting today. Most denominations recognize that without starting new churches they will continue to decline until they are out of existence. Church planting networks have developed to focus on planting new churches. Some denominations and networks concentrate only on male candidates while others are open to all genders.

As networks look for church planters, they recognize that overall church planters tend to be apostolic. Terry Ivy says, "In the NT, the undeniable term used for missionary or church planter is apostle…Church planters and missionaries are men who have the message

of the gospel of Jesus Christ and who are sent out to take it to new people for the purpose of

establishing foundational works" (Ivy). Church planters are also entrepreneurial. Dave Page

writes, "Church planters are spiritual entrepreneurs who know that the odds are stacked

against them in starting a successful church, but they're willing to assume the risk anyway"

(Page). Overall, church planters tend to be self-starters and look for a network for training,

support, and funding. Networks in a sense are competing for qualified church planters.

Fulfilling the Great Commission, countering the decline of churches, and competing

for qualified candidates are three of the factors that drive church planting agencies.

Researching the methods that are most effective assist new church planting networks in

finding and funding church planters.

<div align="center">**Participants**</div>

Criteria for Selection

Network leaders were selected from a variety of church planting networks.

Sensing says, "Purposive samples select people who have awareness of the situation and

meet the criteria and attributes that are essential to your research" (83). Selection was

made from among leaders in the church planting networks who know and understand the

criteria used by their network in finding and funding church planters. Leaders from a

range of different organizations were invited to participate. Selection included leaders

from five different networks of varying sizes, two nation-wide networks, two regional

networks and one local or micro network.

Church planters were selected by the network leaders. Each network leader was

asked permission to send a survey to five church planters that they would select from

within their network. This selection was also purposive. Each church planter was to have

been in the planting process in the last five years. Recent involvement will give a clearer

picture of the success or impact of recruiting and funding methods on recent planters.

Description of Participants

All participants were active in church planting. Network leaders were currently

serving in their positions in the network. All network leaders interviewed were male.

Female leaders were not excluded by design, but a female network leader was not readily

available. The ages ranged from 30 years to 60 years old. The time serving in the position of

recruiting and funding church planters ranged from 3 years to over 20 years.

The church planters were all active in planting a new church in the past five years.

Out of the 25 planters that were emailed surveys, 16 responded. The ages ranged from 25 to

64 years old. The vast majority was white (87.50% white, 6.25% African American and

6.35% other). All participants were married. All participants had earned a Bachelor Degree,

and 31.25% had also earned a Master Degree. Each had gone through the selection process

of becoming a church planter in the different networks. Planters reported all levels of

ministry experience, from one year to over 20 years of experience. The majority had been

involved in church planting 1–5 years (68.25%), while just 6.25% had been involved in

church planting more than 20 years.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent forms were received by all network leaders being interviewed.

This consent form covered both the questionnaire and the follow-up interview. All

participants signed the form and agreed to the terms (see Appendix E). These signed

documents were dated and placed in a safe at the residence of the researcher. The front door

of the building remained locked at all times. The closet containing the safe remained lock at

all times, and the safe remained locked at all times, unless the researcher was accessing the files. Only the researcher had the combination to the safe and keys to the closet.

The questionnaires and follow up interview notes were coded to maintain confidentiality. These documents were also secured as described above.

Survey respondents signed a consent form to enter into the SurveyMonkey online survey. Confidentiality was ensured by privacy protocols of the online survey tool, SurveyMonkey (https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/policy/privacy-policy/). Access to the results were protected by login and passwords to the host site. All data from SurveyMonkey was coded and confidential.

No names or distinguishing information was relayed from either the questionnaire/interviews or the surveys. If any individual reference was necessary, the researcher used a coded system pertaining to the questionnaire (Q-1 through Q-7) and the survey (S-01 through S-21). Interview transcripts, or any other form of raw data will never be released.

Findings of the study were shared with Asbury Theological Seminary faculty and cohort colleagues through the colloquium process. Findings were also shared with the networks involved. Only research findings were given. All raw data remained with the researcher until destroyed after the conclusion of the project. Any data stored on the researcher's password protected computer was deleted at the conclusion of the project.

Instrumentation

The researcher used a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview, and a survey as research instruments. All of the instruments were researcher designed.

The first instrument was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was given to network leaders. The questionnaire consisted of seven open-ended questions. Sensing says that open ended questions "can be narrow in focus requiring only one or two sentences" or "a broad question may prompt some responders to write several paragraphs" (113). The goal of the questionnaire was to gain a complete picture of the recruiting and funding practices of the networks selected.

The second instrument was a semi-structured interview. The interview was performed on the same network leaders. "Specific themes, issues, and questions with predetermined sequence are described in the protocol, but you are free to pursue matters as situations dictate" (Sensing 107). The goal of the interview was to clarify responses in the questionnaire and investigate the reasons behind the recruiting and funding choices. The interview was also designed to get direct feedback concerning each leader's thoughts on the future of recruiting and funding church planters.

The third instrument was a survey. The survey was distributed to current church planters from the same networks as the network leaders. Network leaders were asked to provide five church planters for the survey. Bell says, "The main emphasis is on fact-finding, and if a survey is well constructed and piloted, it can be a relatively cheap and quick way to obtaining information" (qtd. in Sensing 116). The goal of the survey was to be able to gauge the effectiveness and satisfaction of recruiting and funding methods used from the viewpoint of the church planter.

Expert Review

Three expert reviewers were used to examine the instruments, Dr. Milton Lowe, Dr. Bryan Collier, and Reverend Doug Beutler, member of the Regional Planting and

Multiplication Team of The Central Region of the Missionary Church. Dr. Lowe helped

to refine the focus of the questions. Dr. Collier recommended the appropriate number of

network leaders and planters to engage in the research. All recommendations were

evaluated and incorporated into the project, and the reviewers were satisfied with the

changes.

Reliability & Validity of Project Design

To ensure the reliability and validity of the data, the researcher used triangulation.

Triangulation is described as "cross-checking the existence of certain phenomena and the

veracity of individual accounts by gathering data from a number of informants and a

number of sources and subsequently comparing and contrasting one account with another

in order to produce as full and balanced a study as possible" (Sensing 72). The researcher

used five different church planting networks of varying sizes, interviewed the five

network leaders, and sent surveys to five different church planters in each of the networks

for a total of 25 surveys.

The questionnaires and interviews performed with the network leaders were

standardized and submitted to expert review. All the questions were asked in the same

way, and a standardized list of prompts was used to ensure that the interview was

consistent for all network leaders.

The survey presented to the church planters followed the best practices for

conducting surveys. The surveys consisted of Likert scale questions, multiple-choice

questions, and dichotomous questions. Survey participants were selected in the same

manner from all five networks.

The researcher also used an outsider's perspective to ensure that the research addressed what was intended. Sensing says that the outsider "focuses on the fulfillment of the intended purpose of the project in application" (223). The researcher presented the project to Dr. Tim Roehl and received a positive review.

Data Collection

This project is a pre-intervention model. The project looks at the need to recruit and fund church planters and researches the ways church planting networks find and fund planters. While the end goal is to recommend the best practices of recruiting and funding for new church planting networks, this project does not take the step to become a post-intervention model.

The researcher used qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln say, "…qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them…" (3–4). "Researchers use qualitative approaches to explore the behavior, perspectives and experiences of the people they study" (Holloway 2). Following this idea, the researcher examined church planting networks to determine the best methods for recruiting and funding church planters in a new network.

First, the researcher presented a questionnaire to five church planting network leaders. Five networks were selected of various sizes—from a micro network to a national network. The seven questions on the questionnaire were all open-ended. The first two questions pertained to recruiting church planters. Questions three and four focused on funding church planters. Struggles and drawbacks of methods used were addressed by

questions five and six. Question seven dealt with recommendations for recruiting and funding in the future.

Second, the researcher followed up with a semi-structured interview. With a predetermined set of questions, the semi-structured interview allows for probing on specific issues. "However, the probing is narrowed by a preset protocol that correlates with the project's problem and purpose statements" (Sensing 107). The goal of the interview was to determine the reasoning behind each network's recruiting and funding strategies.

Third, the researcher secured five email addresses of church planters who have been active in the last five years from each of the church planting network leaders to respond to a survey. Bell says, "Surveys can provide answers to the questions What? Where? When? And How?, but it is not so easy to find out Why?" (14). With that in mind, the researcher used the survey to determine how each planter was recruited and what was the level of satisfaction they had with the funding model. They surveys were presented via SurveyMonkey. The surveys were then examined to determine how planters were recruited, how they were funded, how effective the planters believed the process for the success of the plant, and the satisfaction of the planter.

Data Analysis

The researcher created transcripts of the questionnaires and interviews. These were compared and contrasted to determine points of commonality. They were inspected for common words and themes. The data was labeled as RBP (Recruiting Best Practices), ROB (Recruiting Obstacles), RFR (Recruiting Future Recommendations), FBP (Funding Best Practices), FOB (Funding Obstacles), and FFR (Funding Future Recommendations).

SurveyMonkey provided the data from the surveys. Each area was inspected for statistical significance. The overall satisfaction level of each church planter and the perceived effectiveness of recruiting and funding from the church planter perspective was recorded.

The researcher compared the findings in the questionnaires and interviews with the findings in the surveys. This was done to determine if the best practices of network leaders were consistent with the satisfaction levels of church planters.

CHAPTER 4

EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

Overall attendance and church growth have been in decline in recent decades. Missiologists like Ed Stetzer and Dan Grider have shared that the American church must not continue on this trend. One way to address this decline is to plant more churches. Planting churches is modeled in the New Testament and is a generally agreed upon strategy for today. However, in order to start new churches, it is important to recruit and fund new church planters. The focus of this project was to find the best practices to recruit and fund church planters in church planting networks.

This chapter first describes the leaders of the five church planting networks who agreed to be involved in the study as well as the church planters from these networks who responded to the church planter survey. Then, the evidence uncovered from the research will be laid out in connection with the three Research Questions for the project. Finally, five specific findings gleaned from the research of this project will be presented.

Participants

The first participants were leaders from five different church planting networks in the United States. These are subject matter experts and practitioners in the field of church planting in networks. Participants were purposefully selected from different sized networks in order to have a broad view of recruiting and funding practices within networks.

Figure 4.1 Church Planting Network Leaders

■ National ■ Regional ■ Micro
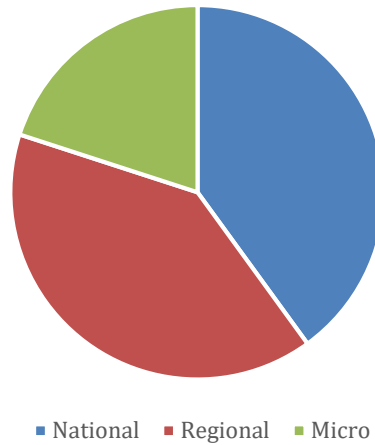
To capture that breadth, leaders from two national networks, two regional networks, and one micro (or local) network were selected for the questionnaire and follow up interviews. No special consideration for age or gender was given. Each was selected specifically for their role in recruiting and funding church planters and that they were leaders in one of the three sizes of church planting networks.

The second group of participants were church planters active within these five church planting networks. The leaders from each network agreed to refer five active church planters who would be willing to participate in the church planters survey.

Figure 4.2 Age of Church Planters
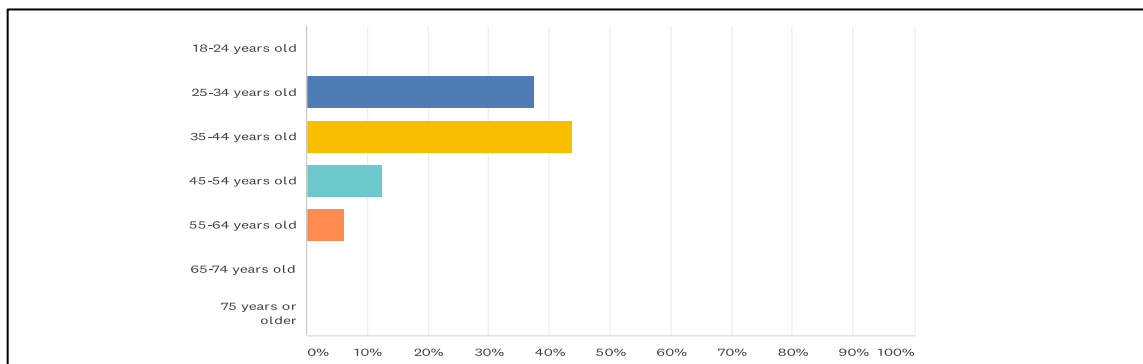
All participants were above 25 years old. The majority of participants were under

the age of 44 (81.25%). Only 6.25% of planters responding were above the age of 55.

Figure 4.3 Ethnicity of Church Planters
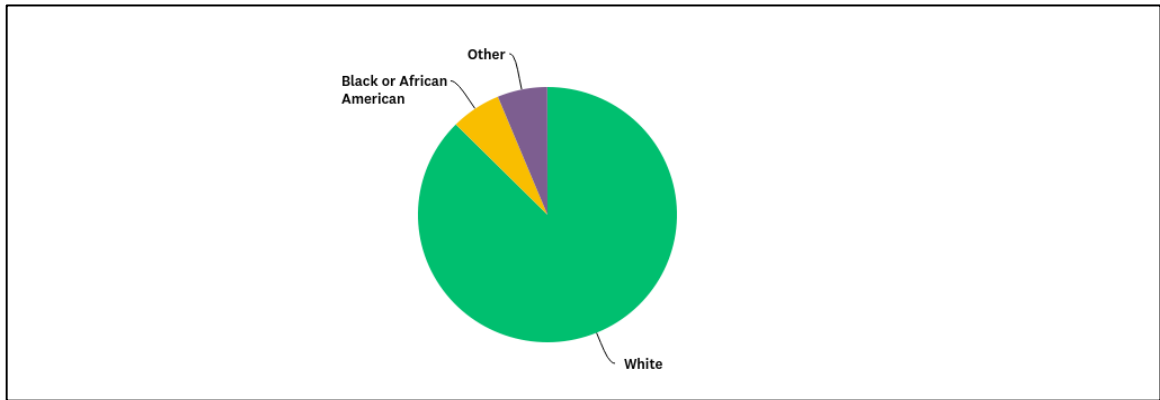
The overwhelming majority of participants identified themselves as White

(87.50%). Just 6.25% identified themselves as African American, while 6.25% identified

their ethnicity as Other.

Figure 4.4 Educational Level of Church Planters
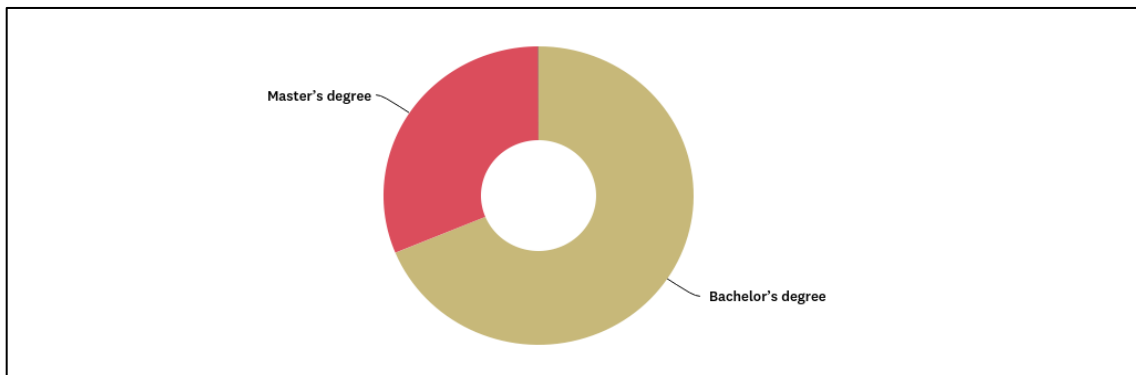
All of the church planters responding had completed a Bachelors' degree, while

31.25% continued on to complete their Masters' degree as well.

Figure 4.5 Ministry Experience of Church Planters
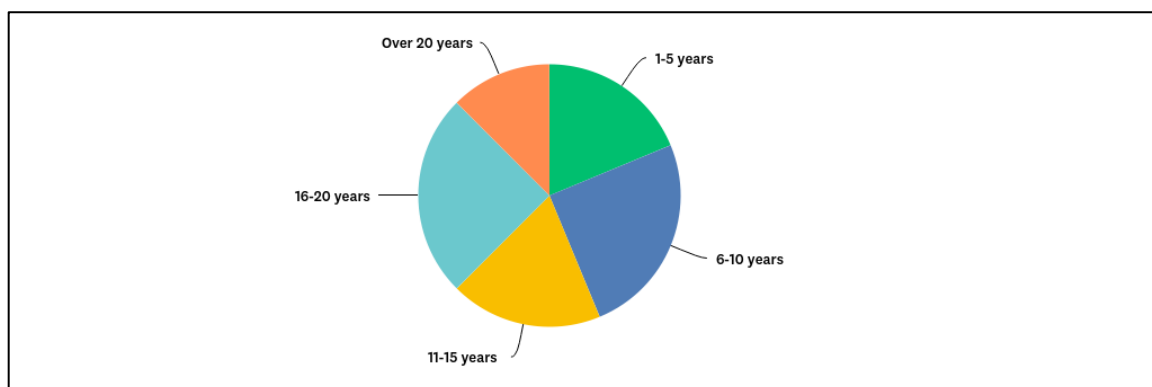
Figure 4.6 Church Planting Experience
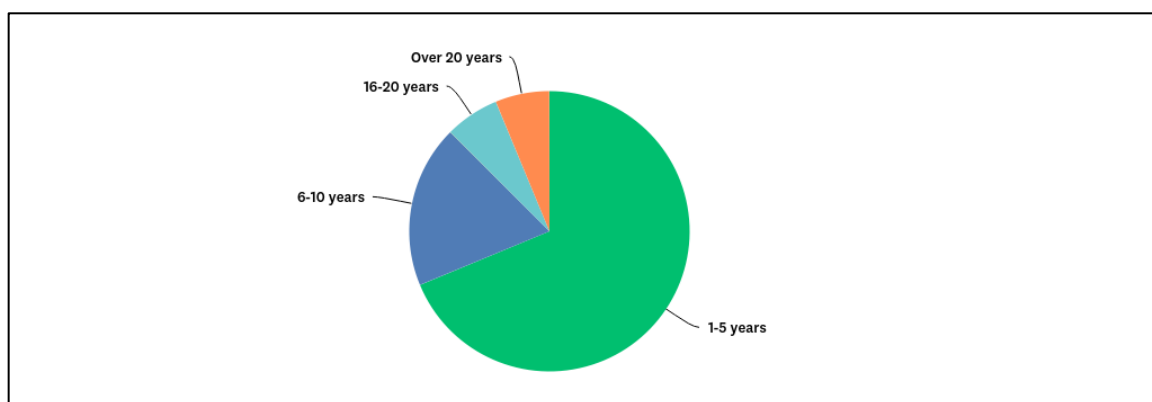
Participants displayed a wide range of ministry experience. The range was nearly evenly balanced throughout the number of years served. However, the vast majority of church planters only had 1–5 years of planting experience (68.75%).

Research Question #1: Description of Evidence

What do church planting network leaders and church planters indicate are the best ways to recruit and fund church planters? The Research Methods/instruments consisted of the Network Leader Interview/Questionnaire and the Church Planters Survey. For the network leaders, Q-1 and Q-2 addressed recruiting church planters. For church planters, S-06 through S-11 addressed recruiting. For the network leaders, Q-3 and Q-4 addressed funding church planters. For church planters, S-12 through S-18 focused on funding.

Recruiting Best Practices

Network Leaders

Each of the five church planting network leaders reported using a variety of methods for recruiting planters. All five reported being involved with and recruiting in conferences like Exponential. Four out of the five network leaders shared that they visited or spoke at colleges and used these opportunities to look for potential church planters. Four of the five listed having an online presence as one of their recruiting methods. One network leader admitted, "We receive the most contacts from our website. However, our online presence actually produces the least number of church planters." All five network leaders stated that they prefer personal referrals and mentoring. While all of the network leaders have used all these methods, each one declared that the most effective method of recruiting new church planters included being in direct relationship with the prospective church planters.

Church Planters

Church planters reported being recruited to their church planting network by various methods. Survey question S-07 asked, "How were you recruited to work with your church planting network?" None of the church planters reported be recruited from school. Only 6.25% reported joining a network from attending a conference like Exponential. Those who stated that they were recruited as a church staff associate was also only 6.25% of respondents. Church planters shared that 18.75% of them responded to "Word of mouth" to join a network. The largest percentage of church planters were mentored to plant (37.50%). The Standard Deviation for this question was 1.26.

Figure 4.7 How Were Church Planters Recruited

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
From School (1)	0.00%	0
as an Associate Pastor (2)	6.25%	1
word of mouth (3)	18.75%	3
from a conference (like Exponential) (4)	6.25%	1
Mentored to Plant (5)	37.50%	6
Other (6)	31.25%	5
TOTAL		16

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
2.00	6.00	5.00	4.69	1.26
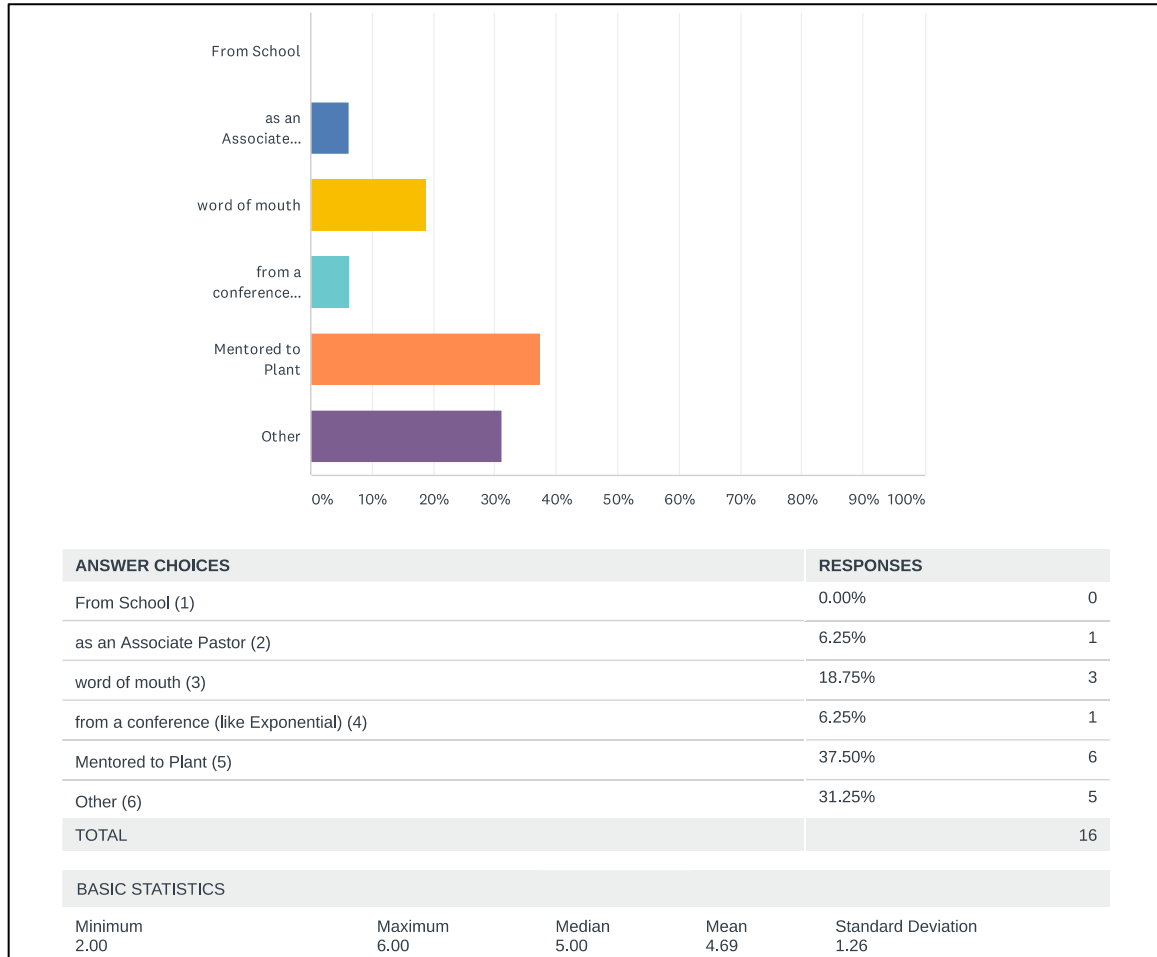
Survey question S-09 was "How much did personal relationship or recruiting relationship factor in your decision to join this network?" The overwhelming majority of Church planters (81.25%) reported that a personal relationship or a recruiting relationship factored "very much" in their decision to join a church planting network. Only 6.25% declared that a personal relationship or a recruiting relationship factored "very little" in their decision to join. No church planters reported that a personal relationship or a recruiting relationship did not matter at all in their decision. The Standard Deviation was 0.56 on these responses.

Figure 4.8 How Much Did Relationship Factor in Decision

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Much (1)	81.25%	13
Somewhat (2)	12.50%	2
Very Little (3)	6.25%	1
Not at all (4)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		16

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	3.00	1.00	1.25	0.56
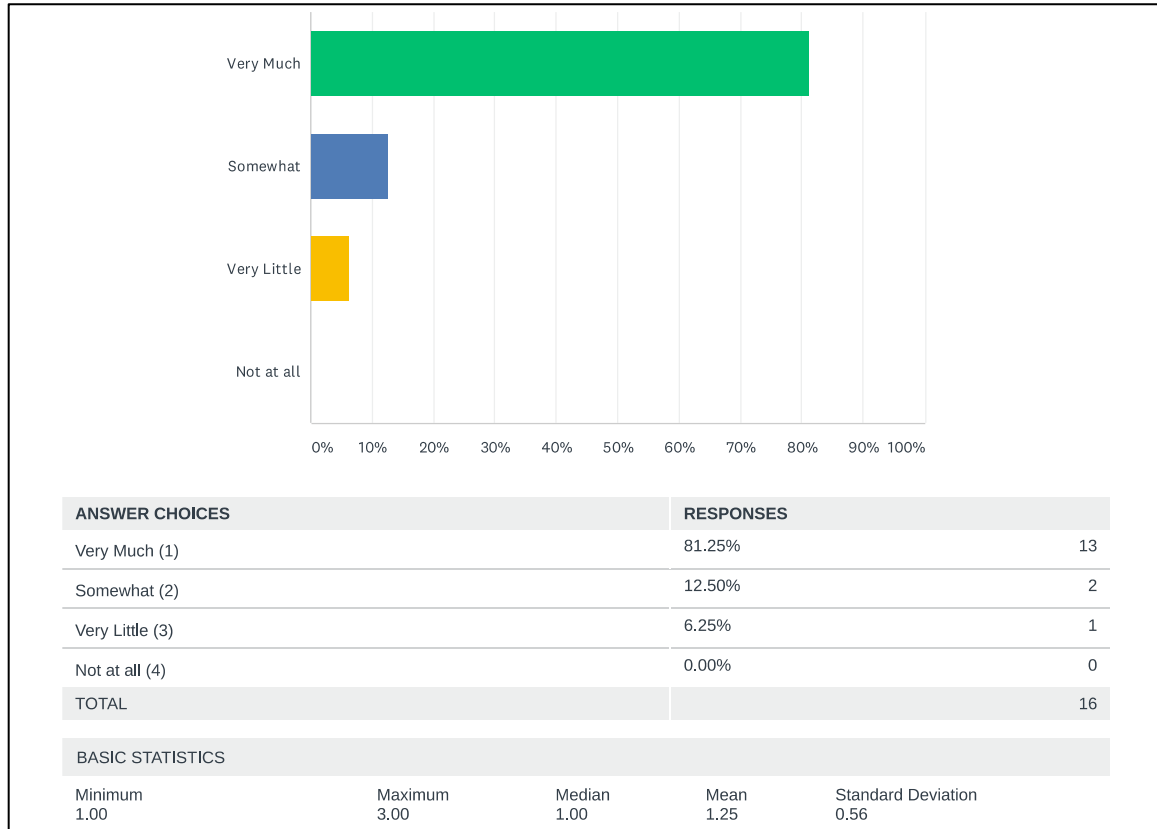
In S-10, church planters were asked, "What was the key factor in your decision to join this network?" The majority of respondents stated that being in relationship with someone in the network was a key factor in joining the network (56.25%). Another 31.25% of church planters responded that their personal calling was the key factor in joining the network. Just 12.50% of church planters noted that training available from the network was their key factor in joining. None of the church planters declared that the location of the church plant was the key factor in their decision. Also, none of the church planters made their decision to join their network while using financial considerations as the key determining factor. The standard deviation for answers on this question was 0.90.

Figure 4.9 Key Factor in Choosing Network

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Financial (1)	0.00%	0
Relationship with people inside network (2)	56.25%	9
Training available (3)	12.50%	2
Calling (4)	31.25%	5
location (5)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		16

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
2.00	4.00	2.00	2.75	0.90
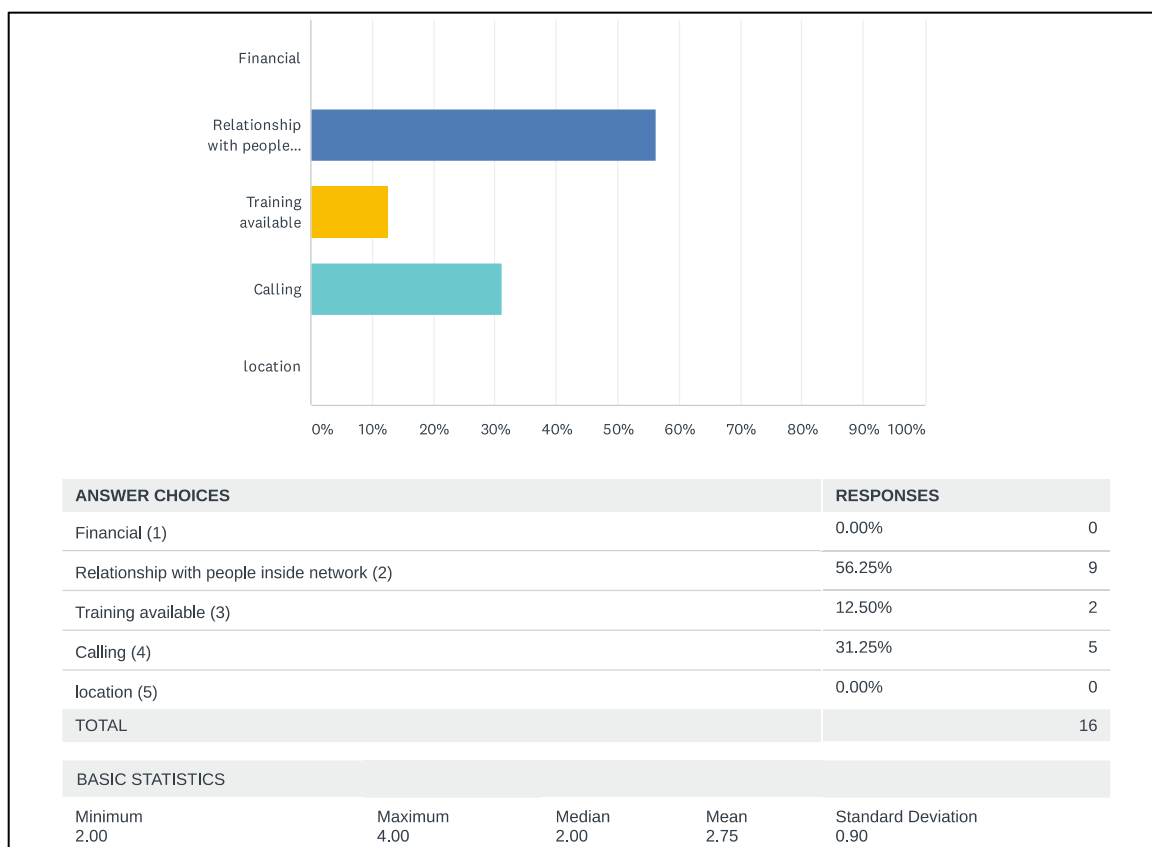
Funding Best Practices

Network Leaders

All five of the different network leaders reported that they were not focused on funding church plants. Three shared that they supply no direct funding, while two shared that they give initial startup gifts of $3,000 and $5,000. Three of the churches encourage planters to be partnered with a local parent church. One network leader laid out a three-part plan for funding church planters. Part One consisted of denominational support. Part Two had the church planter engaging in personal fundraising. Part Three had the church planter partnering with a parent or supporting local church.

Overall, each network leader held the belief that the funding model is not of primary importance. All believed that the planter should be trained in fund-raising or be engaged in a Co-vocational occupation.

Church Planters

The majority of church planters were also not focused on funding directly from the network. S-12 asked, "Which answer best describes the level of funding you expect to receive from the network?" 50% of planters expected no funding at all. Another 18.75% expected only 33% funding from the network. Those expecting to receive 50% funding from the network totaled 18.75%. Only 6.25% expected to receive 66% of funding needed, and another 6.25% expected to receive 75% funding. The vast majority of planters looked to receive 50% or less funding from the network (87.50%), while none of the respondents expected to receive 100% funding from the network.

The Standard deviation for this question was 1.66.

Figure 4.10 Funding Expectations

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0% (1)	50.00%	8
25% (2)	0.00%	0
33% (3)	18.75%	3
50% (4)	18.75%	3
66% (5)	6.25%	1
75% (6)	6.25%	1
100% (7)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		16

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	6.00	2.00	2.50	1.66
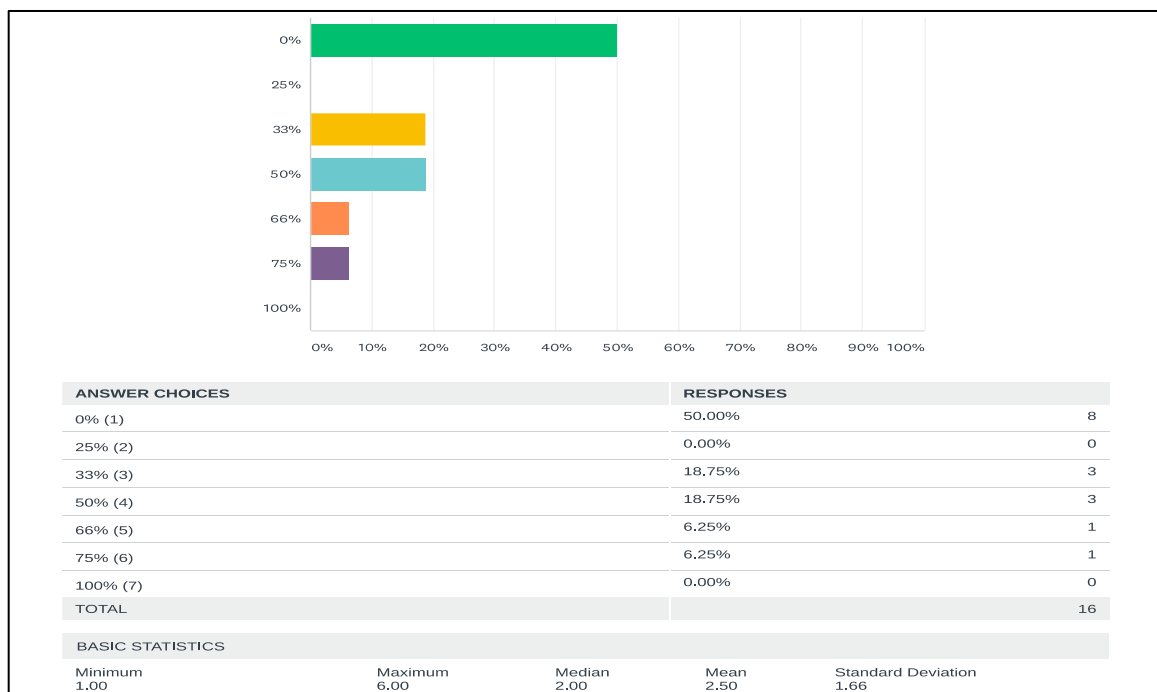
The idea of training church planters as fundraisers in the networks was not reflected by the majority of planters responding. The largest number of respondents reported having received no training in fund raising (37.50%). Another 25% of church planters shared that they had received "some training" in fundraising. This accounted for 62.5% of church planters claiming they received less than adequate training in fundraising.

Planters reporting that they received adequate training totaled 18.75%. Planters who shared that they received great training were 18.75%. This showed that 37.50% received adequate training for fundraising for the church plant. The standard deviation for this question was 1.13.

Figure 4.11 Fundraising Training Received

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No training (1)	37.50%	6
Some training (2)	25.00%	4
Adequate training (3)	18.75%	3
Great training (4)	18.75%	3
TOTAL		16

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	4.00	2.00	2.19	1.13
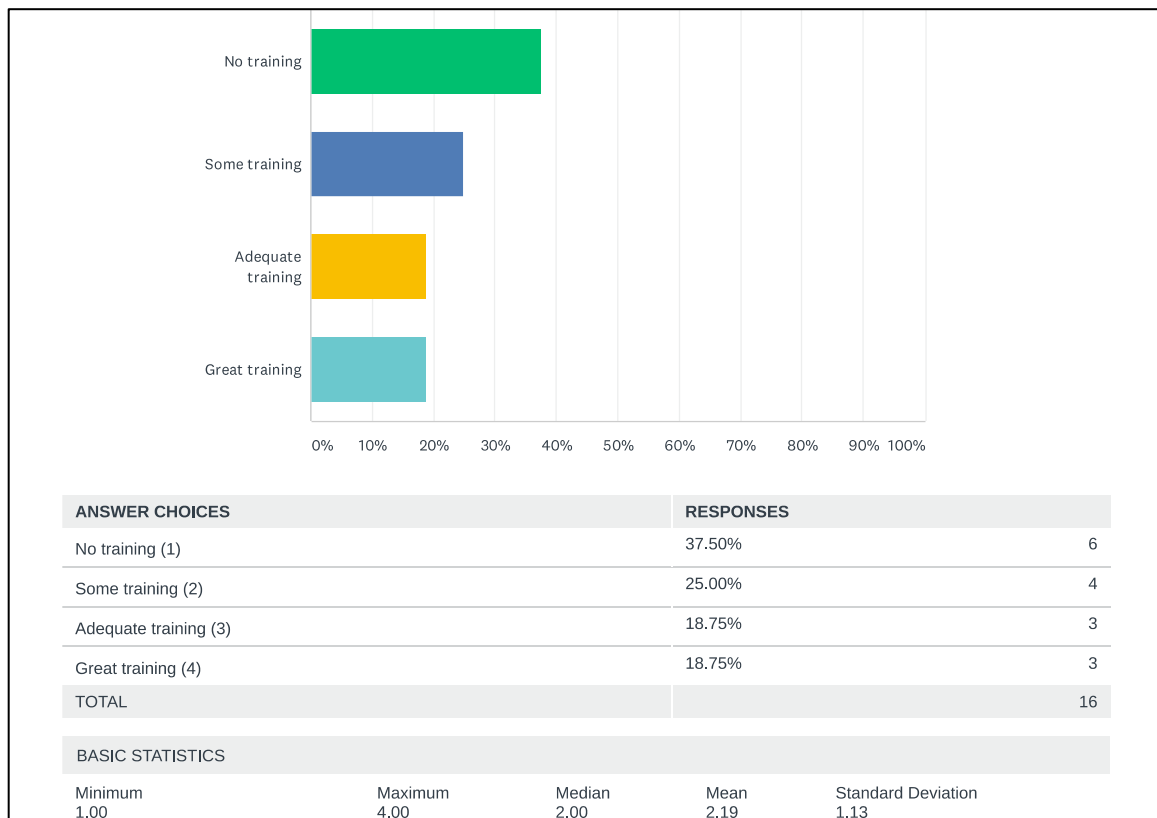
The majority of Church planters (75%) were partnered with an existing church to assist with funding. The remaining 25% were not partnered with a local church to assist with funding. The Standard deviation for this question was 0.43.

Figure 4.12 Partnering with an Existing Church

ANSWER CHOICES			RESPONSES		
Yes (1)			75.00%		12
No (2)			25.00%		4
TOTAL					16

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum 1.00	Maximum 2.00	Median 1.00	Mean 1.25	Standard Deviation 0.43
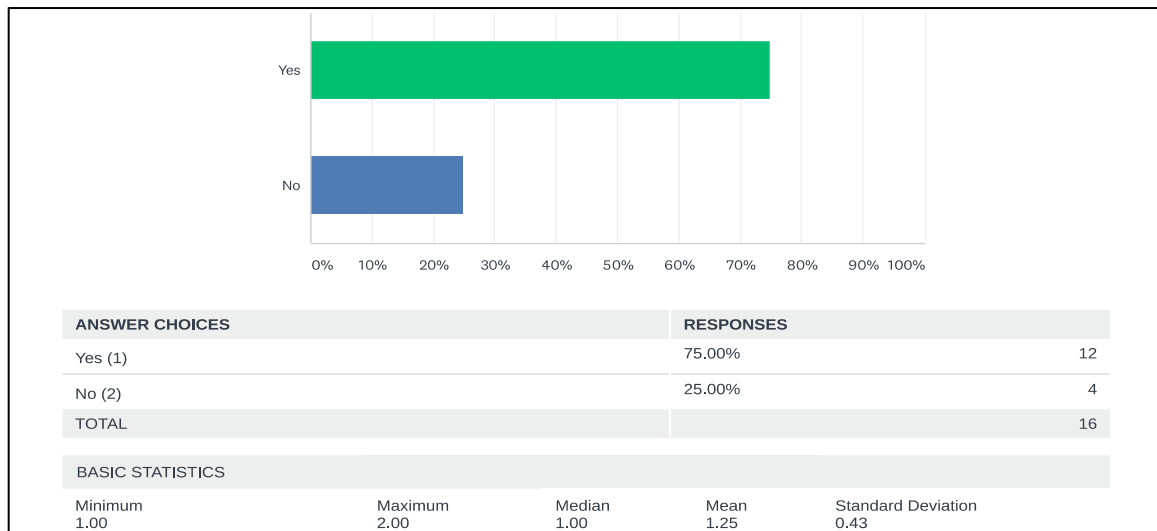
SE-16 asked, "How satisfied were you with the funding model?" The greatest number of respondents were highly satisfied with the funding model of the network (37.50%). Another 18.75% of church planters stated that they were somewhat satisfied. Then, 12.50% said that they were a little satisfied with the funding model. Together, 68.76% reported a level of satisfaction with the funding model of their network.

Some church planters were not satisfied with their funding model. 18.75% shared that they were a little unsatisfied with the funding model, and another 12.50% reported that they were very unsatisfied with the funding model. This accounted for 31.25% of respondents being unsatisfied with the funding model. The Standard deviation for this question was 1.69.

Figure 4.13 Satisfaction with Funding Model

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Highly Satisfied (1)	37.50%	6
Somewhat satisfied (2)	18.75%	3
A little satisfied (3)	12.50%	2
a little unsatisfied (4)	18.75%	3
Somewhat unsatisfied (5)	0.00%	0
Very Unsatisfied (6)	12.50%	2
TOTAL		16

BASIC STATISTICS

Minimum	Maximum	Median	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.00	6.00	2.00	2.63	1.69
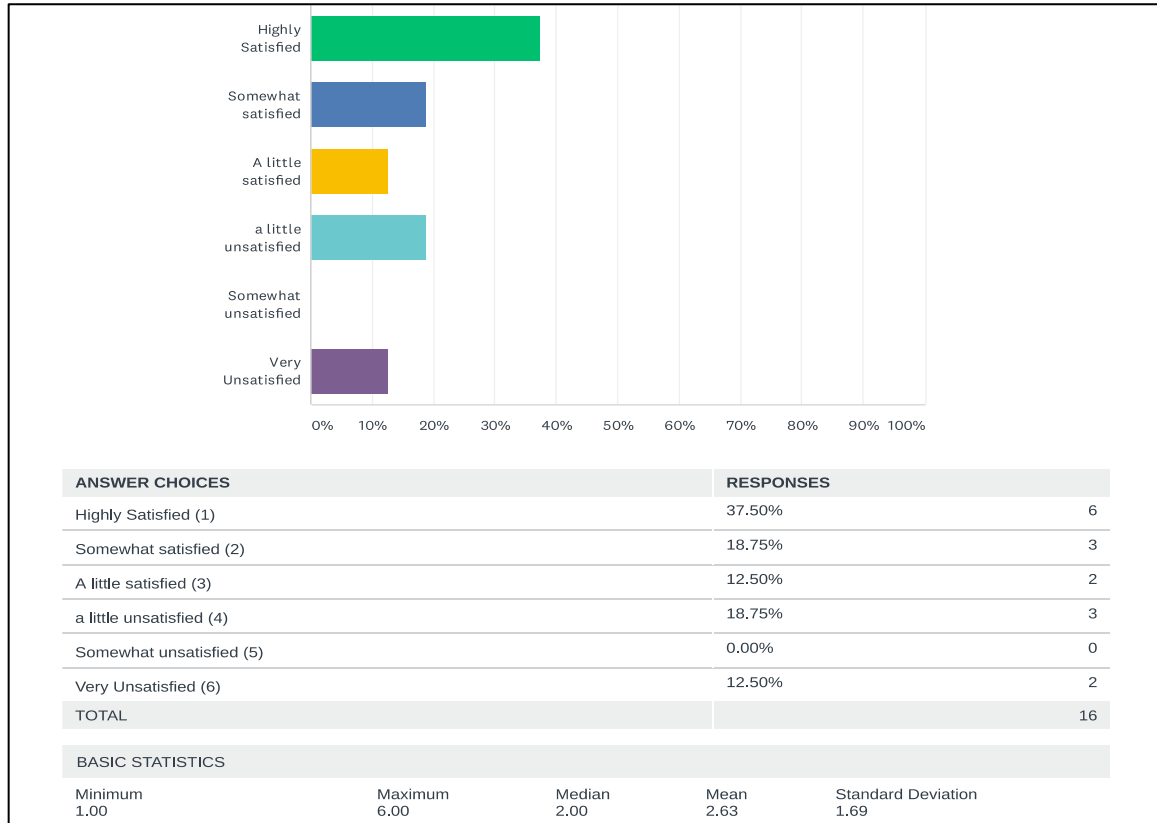
The majority of church planters believed that they received an adequate level of

funding for church planting. The largest group of responders believed they received

adequate funding (56.25%). Then 18.75% stated they received more than adequate

funding. Another 18.75% said they received barely adequate funding. This accounts for

93.75% reporting a level of satisfaction with the funding they received. Only 6.25%

stated they received totally inadequate funding. The Standard deviation was 1.69.

Figure 4.14 Satisfaction with Funding Received

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Highly Satisfied (1)	37.50%	6
Somewhat satisfied (2)	18.75%	3
A little satisfied (3)	12.50%	2
a little unsatisfied (4)	18.75%	3
Somewhat unsatisfied (5)	0.00%	0
Very Unsatisfied (6)	12.50%	2
TOTAL		16

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum 1.00	Maximum 6.00	Median 2.00	Mean 2.63	Standard Deviation 1.69
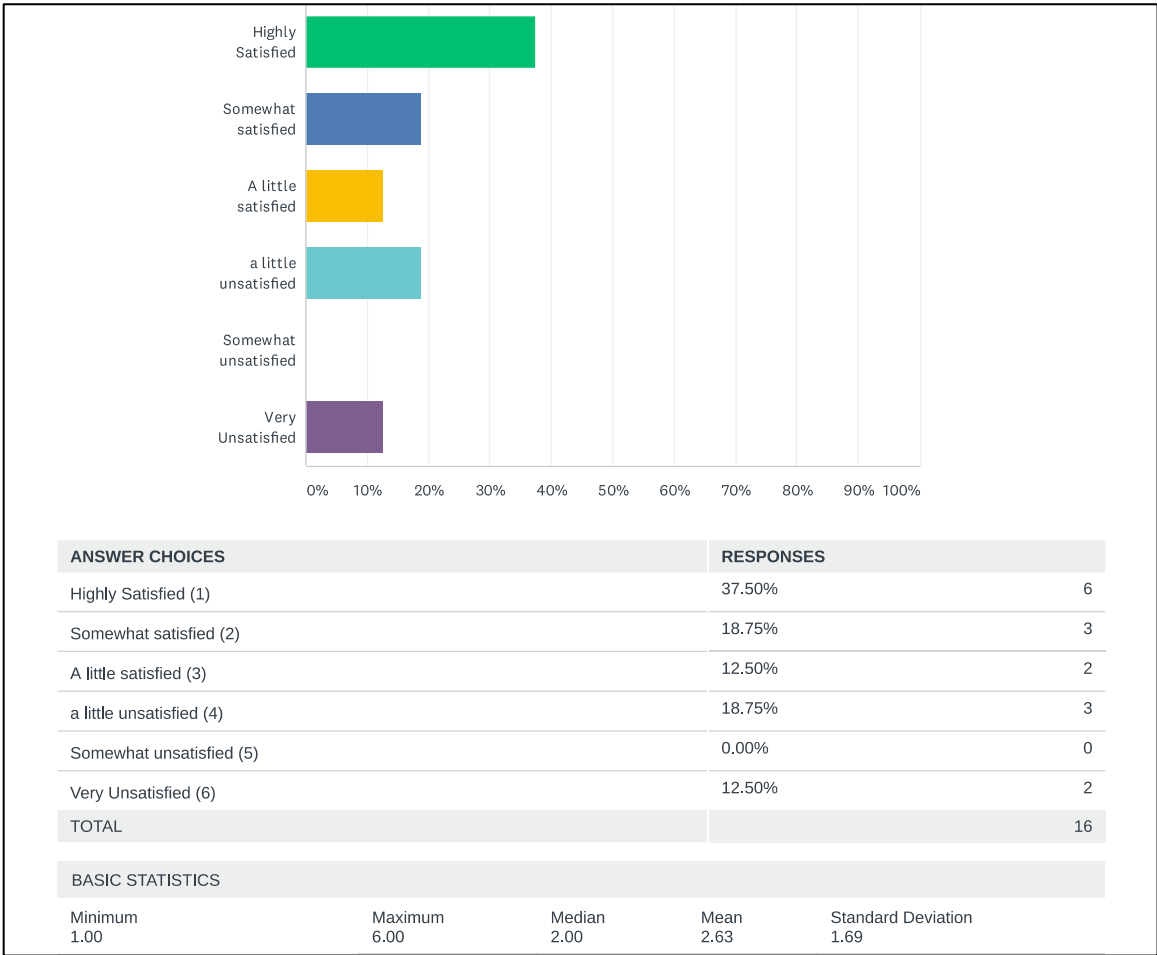
SE-15 asked, "Were you bi-vocational or co-vocational while church planting?" 43.75% of church planter were co-vocational while 56.25% were not co-vocational. The standard Deviation was 0.50.

Figure 4.15 Co-Vocational

ANSWER CHOICES			RESPONSES	
Yes (1)			43.75%	7
No (2)			56.25%	9
TOTAL				16

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum 1.00	Maximum 2.00	Median 2.00	Mean 1.56	Standard Deviation 0.50
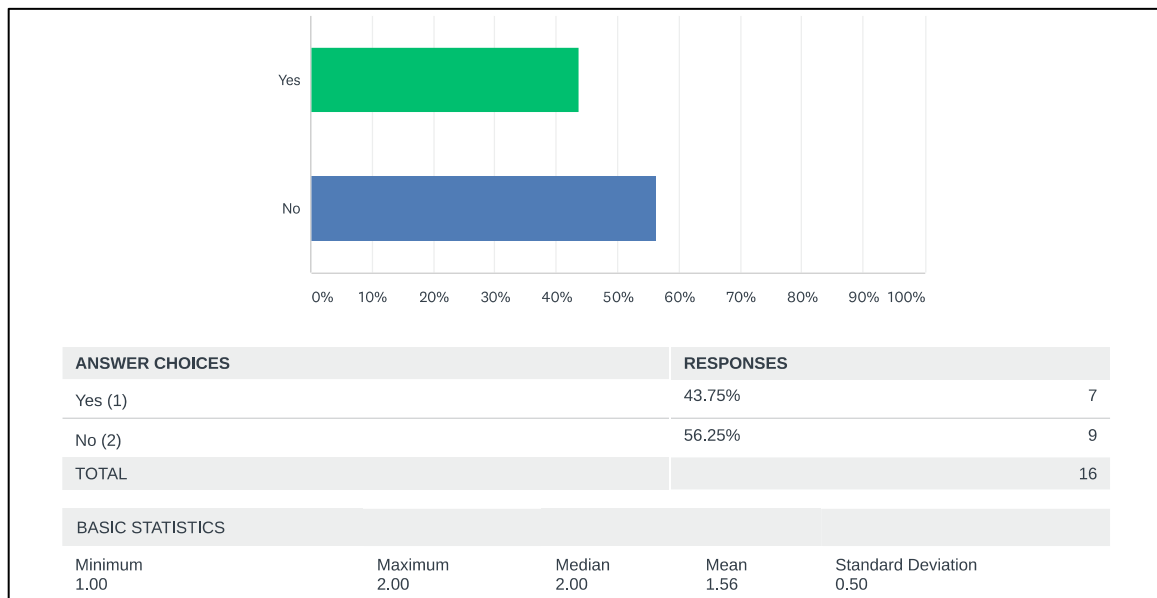
All the church planters who reported being co-vocational stated that it had a positive impact on the church plant. 25% reported that being co-vocational very positively impacted the church plant. Another 18.75% reported somewhat positively. 56.25% were not co-vocational. The standard deviation of this questions was .078.

Figure 4.16 Impact of Being Co-Vocational

ANSWER CHOICES			RESPONSES	
Very negatively (1)			0.00%	0
Somewhat negatively (2)			0.00%	0
Somewhat positively (3)			18.75%	3
Very positively (4)			25.00%	4
NA (5)			56.25%	9
TOTAL				16

BASIC STATISTICS				
Minimum 3.00	Maximum 5.00	Median 5.00	Mean 4.38	Standard Deviation 0.78
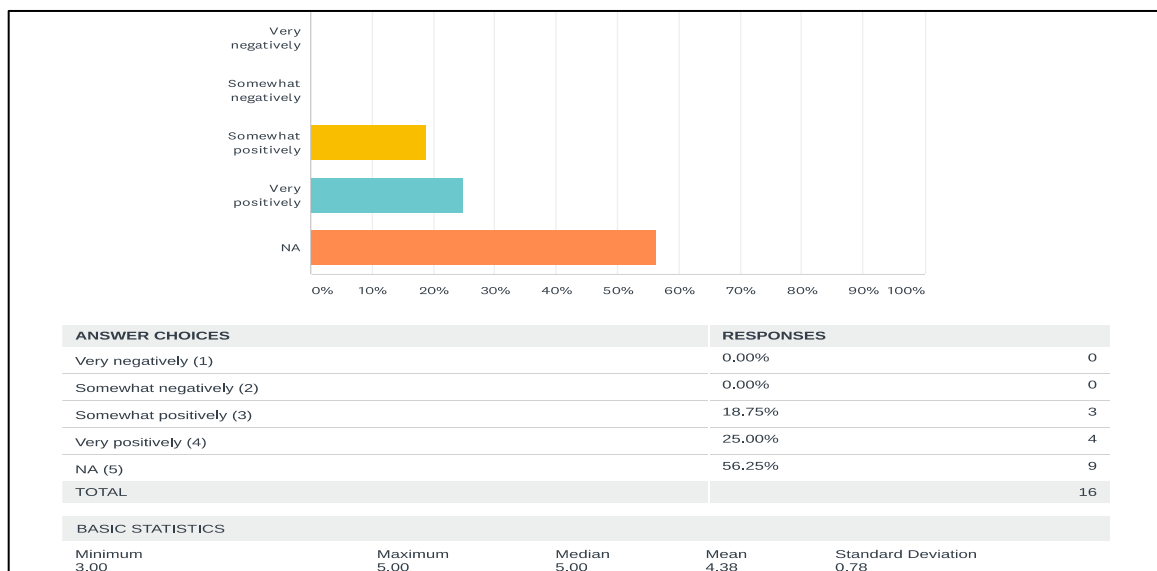
Research Question #2: Description of Evidence

What do church planting network leaders and church planters indicate are barriers to recruiting and funding church planters? For the network leaders, Q-5 and Q-6 addressed obstacles encountered with recruiting and funding church planters. For church planters, S-11, S-13, S-16 and S-17 were used to determine potential obstacles encountered by church planters.

Recruiting Obstacles

Network Leaders

Four of the network leaders talked about the lack of readily available qualified church planters. They used phrases like, "the pool of church planters has dried up," "all the Maverick church planters have been gobbled up," and "The Market is saturated." One mentioned that it was difficult to find good church planters since qualified candidates also made great additions to existing church staff: "We are often competing with the larger church who offer well-paid positions."

Another obstacle network leaders mentioned was finding someone with the unique skills set and experiences necessary to plant churches. One mentioned that he thought of church planters as unicorns, "You just don't find one every day." Another talked about conducting the appropriate screening of church planting candidates, "Not everyone should be a church planter." Yet another said, "We are not just trying to fill a quota."

Another obstacle mentioned was the time it takes to develop a potential planter into a qualified planter. One stated, "It takes time to raise up guys from the harvest."

Another said, "You have to develop a pipeline from the beginning. It is more difficult to develop planters when you are ready to plant."

Church Planters

Very few church planters (6.25%) reported any dissatisfaction with the recruiting process.

All of the church planters stated that they had received the training from the networks that was needed to be an effective church planter: 43.75% strongly agreed and 56.25% agreed that they received adequate training.

Funding Obstacles

Network Leaders

One of the funding obstacles addressed by network leaders was the issue of scalability. An older model consisted of funding the church plants at 100% or giving a large budget up front. As it became evident that more church plants were needed, churches, denominations, and especially networks were not able to scale this model up. One response said, "Scalability was the key issue. It is so limited if we do it the old way."

One of the new models also had drawbacks. The plan was for planters to be fundraisers first. The obstacle was church planters needed to raise funding in a timely manner in order to start work on the church plant. One network leader mentioned that this was especially difficult in a "parachute drop" (meaning the planter moved into a new area without local support). They remarked, "If they are already living in that community, it is much easier. Parachute drops were most difficult, both relationally and financially."

Another pair of obstacles or challenges came with the plan of partnering church planters with existing churches for funding.

The first obstacle with a partner church was relying on the partner church raising

funds effectively. One network leader stated, "As we rely on the local church, we have

some that budget church planting well and some that do not." The issue was believed to

be in not placing a priority on church planting financially.

The second obstacle with a partner church became properly training a church to

be a supporting/sending church. "We needed to provide training and development for the

local churches, to make it a priority to those churches to fund planting new churches."

Church Planters

While network leaders stated that it was an obstacle for some planters to raise

funds to start a new work in a timely manner, training for raising funds could be seen as

an obstacle for planters. Of church planters surveyed, only 18.75% believed they received

"great training" as a fund raiser. In fact, 37.50% stated they received "no training" as

fund raisers, and 25% received "some training".

Another obstacle for church planters was being connected to a local church or

support church. A strong minority, 25% of planters, responded that they had not been

connected with a local church to assist them with funding or fundraising.

Overall, only 31.25% of responding church planters reported any level of

dissatisfaction with their funding model, and 6.25% declared the funding they received

was inadequate for church planting.

<center>**Research Question #3: Description of Evidence**</center>

What are best practices moving forward for recruiting and funding church

planters? The Research Methods/instruments consisted of a synthesis of data gathered in

answering RQs 1 & 2, answers from Q-5 through Q-7, and answers from S-15 through S-21.

Future Recruiting Recommendations

First, network leaders recommended recruiting through relationships. One network leader stated, "People who are referred have more realistic expectations because they have been briefed. They have friends involved and know what to expect." Another said, "The EXPO booth is the lowest level of recruiting, but it gives us an opportunity to build relationships with potential planters down the road. We invite (potential planters) to dinners and events to grow the relationship before we recruit." Leaders stated that it is about relationships.

Second, network leaders recommend developing a planter pipeline. When asked what recruiting strategy is recommended, one network leader said, "I recommend you don't recruit. Instead, you raise up from within." Another leader agreed saying, "We are trying to raise people up from within now. I recommend having people join a plant and serve in a plant in the network before branching out to start something new." Another agreed and recommended, "instilling in the DNA the principles of raising up the next generation – both the church planter and the planting team as well." The idea was to develop future church planters continually.

Church planters responded that relationship was important for them. Being in a relationship with people inside the network was the key factor for the majority of planters (56.25%). This ranked above location, finances, and calling. Also, the largest percentage of planters (37.50%) declared that they were mentored to be church planters.

Future Funding Recommendations

One of the recommendations that network leaders presented was the idea of Developing Church Partners to assist in the funding of church planters. "Existing churches often have the ability and the finances to invest in new churches." Leaders report that Partner Churches can offer stable financing and a strong support structure for church planters, "Planters can serve in an associate role in the partner church while preparing the new work."

A second recommendation for fundraising from network leaders was to encourage personal fundraising and co-vocational work. "We now train our church planters to be fundraisers and to be co-vocational," said one network leader. Another added, "It really is about relationships. We want to give training on fundraising and partnering with churches. Funding comes through those relationships and sharing vision."

Church planters also responded positively in these two areas. The vast majority (75%) of planters were partnered with existing churches to assist in funding the new church plant. 43.75% of planters were also serving co-vocationally as they planted a new church. All of the planters working co-vocationally responded that it somewhat positively or very positively impacted the new church plant.

Summary of Major Findings

There were five major findings from the questionnaire/interview and the surveys that can be used to guide a new church planting network.

1. Church Planting networks and church planters highly value relationship in the recruiting process.

2. Network Leaders are focusing more on developing leadership pipelines and raising up planters from within.

3. Church Planting Network Leaders seek partner churches to support planters.

4. Being Co-vocational is viewed as a positive option by leaders and planters.

CHAPTER 5

LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT

Overview of the Chapter

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to fulfill the Great Commission. As

Peter Wagner said, "Planting new churches is the most effective evangelistic

methodology known under heaven" (Wagner 168). Following this vein of reasoning,

church planting networks have engaged in planting new churches. Two key factors in

planting a new church are recruiting church planters and funding the process. The

purpose of this research was to discover and evaluate recruiting and funding practices of

church planters in church planting networks in order to develop the best methods for a

new church planting network.

Research led to four major findings concerning finding and funding church

planters. In this chapter, each of these four findings will be addressed, focusing on

personal observations during the research, how the literature lines up with each finding,

and what the biblical framework says about each finding. Then, the impact that these

findings may have on future ministry is examined. Next, the limitations of this study will

be outlined. Then, any unexpected observations in the research will be laid out. Finally,

recommendations for future use of this research will be presented.

Major Findings

First Finding – Importance of Relationship

Throughout the study, it was evident that relationships, both for the network

leaders and the planters, was most important in finding church planters. Although

network leaders continue to use low relationship methods like the internet and

conferences, they declared that those methods are substantially less productive than high relationship methods of recruiting like direct referrals and mentoring. At Exponential 2019, I observed planters and potential planters connecting in relationship events following the general sessions more than finding connections at the network booths. Remarkably, 81.25% of church planters stated that personal relationship factored "very much" in their decision to join a church planting network.

I believe this lines up with the theological idea of placing Christology first, and that Christology informs our Missiology which builds our Ecclesiology. Again, Hirsch says, "If we get this the wrong way around…we can never be disciples of Jesus, and we will never be an authentic missional church" (209). The idea of being in a relationship with a prospective planter first leans into the idea that the planter is first in relationship with Christ. That relationship is of primary importance. By being in relationship with potential planters, leaders model the idea that a relationship with Christ is first, then the mission of Christ (church planting in this case) is shaped by that relationship with Christ. That, in turn, shapes the way churches will be done in that setting. This appears to be essential in networks. Focusing on relationships first reminds church planters that we first focus on a relationship with Christ, then engage in his mission to make disciples, which in turn builds the local church or church plant.

The idea of relationship first is also in the biblical literature. God's call to mission comes through the relationship God has with His people. God was in relationship with Adam when He gave the mission to "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:28, NIV). God was in relationship with Abram when He called him (Gen. 12:1–2, NIV). Jesus was in relationship with the disciples when He gave them the Great Commission to "Go and

make disciples" (Matt. 18:19, NIV). And that call to make disciples is also a call to be in

relationship. "Disciple-making is not about sharing the gospel with people and then

leaving them to figure out the Christian life on their own. Instead, we show them how to

follow Christ on a day-by-day basis" (Platt).

God's call is about relationship: first being in relationship with Christ, so that the

Christian can then be in relationship with others, in order to introduce them to a

relationship with Christ. The importance of relationship in recruiting church planters is

both practically and theologically sound.

Second Finding – Developing Pipelines

All of the network leaders discussed the idea of raising up the next group of

church planters from the "harvest" or among those who are coming to Christ within the

network of church plants. One shared that his advice for new networks is to "Embrace the

concept of pipeline and leadership development. Think about the short game versus the

long game. Develop the pipeline for tomorrow rather than just focusing on what can I get

for today." Another said it really is all about discipleship, making disciples who make

disciples. "It is all housed on discipleship. Discipleship in the local church leads to

disciple makers. Church planters grow in making disciples in the local church and take

the next step to do it in the next town and next city." Another said, "as you make

disciples, you create a movement, and then the movement feeds the process." Yet another

leader shared, "We are trying to raise people up from within now. I recommend having

people join a plant and serve in a plant in the network first. Then they can be mentored

into branching out to start something new."

Developing a pipeline for church planters addresses the issue of finding qualified church planters. Instead of finding them, you mentor them. The Ridley assessment for church planters is an experiential assessment (Ridley 92–96). The idea is that past performance or behaviors in key church planting areas will predict future behaviors in those area. With a pipeline, instead of searching for someone who already possesses these key experiences, you train someone extensively to work through these experiences. It is the idea of mentoring versus recruiting. In the network, you give a potential planter the opportunity to learn and even fail under the guidance of experienced church planters. Nelson Searcy said, "Show me a church planter who has never failed, and I'll show you one who has never taken a risk" (9 Characteristics). The key to long term effectiveness is "failing forward." A pipeline affords the inexperienced potential church planter to fall forward in an environment that is nurturing. Failure, then, is a learning experience where there is little damage (unlike a failed church plant). Of Ed Stetzer's list of six indicators of a church planter, three deal with patterns of behavior, and one deals with church affirmation. All four of these can be trained or mentored in a church planter pipeline.

The idea of experiential mentoring is reflected in Paul's relationship with Timothy in 2 Timothy. "Throughout 2 Timothy, we see the Apostle Paul guiding the learning of Timothy. We see him helping Timothy look backward at experiences and connect forward with learned perspective" (Oney). Paul calls Timothy his son and encourages Timothy to pass on this experiential teaching to others. "You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Tim. 2:1–2, NIV). Although not specifically called a pipeline, Paul outlines the

plan. He has spent time with Timothy and taught him how to minister experientially, and then he releases Timothy to then train others in the same manner. Those Timothy taught were then expected to pass on the training to others. This aligns with the network leaders' plan to develop pipelines to mentor church planters.

Third Finding – Partner Churches

Both the satisfaction level of planters and the support offered to planters are positively affected by having partner churches. Planters reported that 75% of them were partnered with a church in the network. One network leader said they developed an extensive network of church relationships to assist their planters. "We point to those who are able to be partners even financially with a planter." Small churches do not always believe they can partner to plant a church. But one leader points out that size of congregation is not a requirement to partner. "We have no huge mother churches, but our partners were able to support financially at maybe $25k a year."

Connecting existing churches to new starts is modeled in current circles. The Minnesota Church Multiplication Network gives this definition, "A Parent or Partner Church is a church that has taken primary responsibility to help a church plant and church planter establish a vibrant and healthy faith community" ("Become A Parent or Partner Church."). Acts 29 church planting network states that they want to "support and equip churches to plant churches that will plant church-planting churches!" (Acts29.com). Robert Ransom, from Generate North American Ministries believes that "Churches plant churches. Not denominations, not regional leaders. Churches plant churches" (Ransom).

Acts 13 describes partner churches planting churches. Again, Jamieson says, "It was from Antioch that teachers were first sent forth with the definite purpose of

spreading Christianity, and organizing churches, with regular institutions" (Jamieson).

The church at Antioch sent and supported Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul

in their church planting movement. Antioch was in essence the very first partner church.

Fourth Finding – Co-vocational

Network leaders shared that earlier funding models for church planting did not

allow for the scaling that is necessary today. One of the answers is for church planters to

have another job or income stream. All of the church planters in the survey who stated

that they were co-vocational said it had a positive impact on the church plant. All the

network leaders viewed co-vocational work positively as well.

Being co-vocational was also not looked at as a financial necessity but as a

strategic step in church planting. In his book *BiVO*, Hugh Halter noted, "Your secular

work is the soil in which God plants his sacred kingdom work. Therefore, your work is

not a hinderance to what God is doing, but instead a significant part of what he is doing"

(Halter xx). Brad Brisco agrees, "Today there is a new movement among bi-vocational

leaders. More church planters are choosing to plant bi-vocationally. They are making this

decision out of the conviction that bi-vocational church planting actually provides a more

desirable way to plant a new church, rather than on the basis of limited funds. In other

words, it is becoming a first option, not a last resort" (Brisco 20). Once thought of as a

restriction or limitation to a church planter, having a secular occupation is being looked at

as an opportunity to engage in the community as a planter. Brisco and Halter have

recently changed the title bi-vocational to co-vocational to note that having the secular

job does not split church planting focus but works hand in hand with church planting

(Brisco & Halter, Exponential 2019).

The Apostle Paul is a biblical example of being co-vocational in ministry. In Acts 18:1–4, Paul engaged in secular work as he ministered in Corinth. "After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks" (Acts 18:1–4, NIV). Worldwide Tentmakers cites Paul's example in their call to join in bi-vocational ministry in saying,

> [Paul] used his skill of making tents to carry him into some very difficult mission fields and into areas, such as Corinth, dominated by commerce. For Paul making tents was not just about paying expenses… His trade gave him regular day-to-day contact with merchants and travelers. This contact furnished him the opportunity to minister, and it also furnished him legitimacy because he was providing a needed skill in the community…Therefore, his trade, in Corinth, was a tool that provided greater opportunity to share the saving grace of Jesus Christ both during the week and even on the Sabbath in the synagogue. ("What Is A Tentmaker?")

Paul's example of co-vocational work can serve as a model for church planters today.

Ministry Implications of the Findings

The need for church planting is growing. As networks form to facilitate church planting, the need to recruit and fund church planters is growing as well. The findings in this study have the following implications for ministry.

First, church planting networks can shift their focus from recruiting church planters to developing new church planters. The idea of developing pipelines that nurture

potential church planters into planters with experience in the key behaviors has great

merit. Instead of hoping to find a new planter from somewhere outside, churches with a

real vision for discipleship and church multiplication can regularly mentor and train new

planters. Finding church planters becomes less about finding a hired gun and more about

discipleship.

Second, while creative forms to fund church planting can be helpful, the methods

of partner churches and co-vocational work can be the strongest, most consistent methods

for church planting networks. Partner churches can give both financial and practical aid.

Even smaller churches can come together in partnership to help fund and train church

planters. Potential church planters do not have to feel alone and misunderstood. Instead,

they can receive needed experience in disciple making while in a supportive

environment. Partner churches can be involved in planting new churches where they

might otherwise not be involved in multiplication at all. Co-vocational work also gives

planters regular access to people who may never enter a church. Often, professional

ministers can have reduced contact with the lost as they care for Christians. When

working co-vocationally, planters have connections with those from the community who

are not involved with church. Also, co-vocational church planters may be seen as being

actively involved in the community and gain credibility as well as meeting the financial

needs of their family.

Finally, church planting networks can see that relationships are more important

than recruiting. Church planters listed relationship with people within the networks as the

key reason for joining that network. Again, this points to the idea of discipleship instead

of merely filling needed positions. As leaders mentor potential planters, they are able to

nurture and evaluate behaviors that give the experience necessary to be an effective

church planter. Being in a relationship with network leaders also gives church planters

resources to reach out to for encouragement and support as they do the work of planting a

new church.

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study was that I was only able to interview men as

network leaders. There was no intentional plan to exclude women. All of the network

leaders I researched had men in charge of recruiting and funding church planters.

Although no women were interviewed, I do not believe this had any adverse effect on the

study.

Another potential limitation was in the scope of the study. I purposefully

interviewed network leaders of various sizes to gain a wide view of network leaders. A

possibility is to narrow the study in the future to specific a size of network. This could

produce a larger look at a specific size of network in order to offer recommendations to

networks of that same size.

Finally, another limitation may have come from my wording. I continually used

the term "recruiting" planters. A better term may have been "finding" planters. While

these terms may initially seem synonymous, recruiting may by understood as looking for

people from the outside while finding may be understood as discovering planters

wherever they may be found. I do not believe my choice of term negatively impacted this

study, but specific terminology may be better in the future.

Unexpected Observations

One of the unexpected observations I discovered is that funding models were not an important factor for church planters. While ministry takes money, 50% of church planters expected no funding from their church planting networks. Networks are seen as sources of relationship, training, mentoring, and connection. Likewise, network leaders were not focused on how to fund church planters but on being a resource for planters to find the funding they need from fund raising, partner churches, and co-vocational work.

Another pleasantly unexpected observation I made is the reliance that network leaders gave to prayer. One leader said, "Prayer is the key thing in raising up planters. The church planters we have gained have been in direct answer to prayer. I encourage leading a team to pray for and see that God does." "There is the practical and spiritual, the spiritual always trumps. On paper a person might be great, but we need the Holy Spirit to guide us. Prayer is essential." Although we might think that prayer is essential, it is refreshing to hear strategic leaders acknowledge prayer as the most important part of their plans in their networks.

Recommendations

While I believe this study produced good results, I have a few recommendations for future or continued study in this area.

1. The study could be continued to include partner churches. This would give insight into the effect that church planting had on the partner church congregation. Was there a positive effect in being directly connected to sending off church planters, or was there a time of mourning and stress for the partner church? Answers here could encourage more churches to become partner churches.

2. Further study could be done on how the proposed pipeline works in developing and nurturing prospective church planters. What is the success ratio of finding new church planters? What methods are used for training church planters in the behaviors needed to be effective church planters? How effective are these methods in weeding out high risk planters? Answers to these questions could produce good models to use in new networks.

3. Further study could also be done on the effect of co-vocational work on both the church planter and the new church plant success. Does the time spent on the secular work adversely affect the work on the new church? Do the connections made on the co-vocational job help produce more disciples? Does the financial gain of the secular employment meet the needs of the planting family? Knowing these answers could strengthen the strategic plan to encourage co-vocational work of church planters.

Postscript

As I have walked through this research, my ministry has changed direction. I started this project as a founding pastor of a church plant that had grown into an established church. I worked with other lead pastors to form a lead team to help plant churches together. Finally, I stepped out to plant again and hope to start a new church planting network.

The research led to this recommendation for a new church planting network. Rather than recruit or search for additional church planters, a new network would do better to play the long game and develop future church planters from within the network. Although this initially takes more time, it quickly moves from addition to multiplication in planting new churches. This pipeline would work in the same way as discipleship,

being in relationship with potential planters, training them in the necessary behaviors of church planters, and being partnered with other potential church planters.

Another key aspect of this pipeline would be to stress partnering with an established church or churches for both financial and practical support. Perhaps the greatest support these partner churches would give is prayer support and encouragement. Often planters present an entrepreneurial spirit to the degree that they appear to need no support. Stressing the need for this support in partner churches from the beginning would be a real strength for the network. The goal would be on have strength in relationships of those who understand the mission and are in regular prayer for the planter and family.

A third component that would round out the foundation for a new church planting network would be the encouragement to be co-vocational. Traditionally in the U. S., a co-vocational pastor was viewed as splitting time in order to make things work financially. Now, the idea is to be involved in the community by working alongside members of the community. This gives connection and a sense of legitimacy in the community. The goal would be for the planter to have a living wage in the community to free resources for the church as well and develop relationships and disciple others in connection with that job. It is a win-win scenario.

I am personally implementing these recommendations as I continue on the church planting journey. As I plant my next church, I am working co-vocationally in the community, looking for potential planters from within the groups I am discipling, and staying connected with partner churches for regular support. I believe this is a biblical model that is growing in practice among church planting networks today.

APPENDIX A

Church Planter Survey - Recruiting and Funding

You are invited to be in a research study being done by Jeffrey Horsman from Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you are a church planter in a church planting network. This study examines different practices in recruiting and funding church planters in church planting networks.

This survey will be completely anonymous. It is conducted online. I will have no access to your identity. The responses from the survey will be confidential. In any sort of report, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify those taking the survey. Records will be destroyed within one year of the completion of the project.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

By clicking "OK" and continuing on to take the survey means that you have read this and that you agree to participate in the study. You agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done and what to do.

Thank you for taking this survey. It consists of four parts - Demographics, Recruiting, Funding and Overall Experience. Your participation will greatly assist in this research project.

Demographics
In this section, you will share statistical data about yourself.

1. Age: What is your age?
18-24 years old
25-34 years old
35-44 years old
45-54 years old
55-64 years old
65-74 years old
75 years or older

2. Ethnic origin: Please specify your ethnicity.
White
Hispanic or Latino
Black or African American
Native American or American Indian
Asian / Pacific Islander
Other

3. Education: What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?
If currently enrolled, highest degree received.
No schooling completed
Nursery school to 8th grade
Some high school, no diploma
High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED)
Some college credit, no degree
Trade/technical/vocational training
Associate degree
Bachelor's degree
Master's degree
Professional degree
Doctorate degree

4. Marital Status: What is your marital status?
Single, never married
Married or domestic partnership
Widowed
Divorced
Separated

5. Ministry Experience: How long have you been involved in ministry?
1-5 years
6-10 years
11-15 years
16-20 years
Over 20 years

6. Church Planting Experience: How long have you been involved in Church Planting?
1-5 years
6-10 years
11-15 years
16-20 years
Over 20 years

Recruiting
In this section, you will share how you were recruited to join your church planting network.

7. How were you recruited to work with your church planting network?
From School
as an Associate Pastor
word of mouth
from a conference (like Exponential)
Mentored to Plant

Other

8. What type of training did you expect to receive from the network?
Church Planter Boot Camp
Assessment Center
Residency
Coach/mentor
On the Job
None

9. How much did personal relationship or recruiting relationship factor into your decision to join this network?
Very Much
Somewhat
Very Little
Not at all

10. What was the key factor in your decision to join this network?
Financial
Relationship with people inside network
Training available
Calling
location

11. How satisfied were you with the recruiting process?
Highly Satisfied
Somewhat satisfied
A little satisfied
a little unsatisfied
Somewhat unsatisfied
Very Unsatisfied

Funding
This section will ask about your funding as a church planter in your church planting network.

12. Which answer best describes the level of funding you expect from the network?
0%
25%
33%
50%
66%
75%
100%

13. What level of training did you receive for fundraising?
No training
Some training
Adequate training
Great training

14. Were you partnered with a church or churches to assist in funding your Church plant?
Yes
No

15. Were you bi-vocational or co-vocational while church planting?
Yes
No

16. How satisfied were you with the funding model?
Highly Satisfied
Somewhat satisfied
A little satisfied
a little unsatisfied
Somewhat unsatisfied
Very Unsatisfied

Overall Experience
This section addresses your personal experience regarding recruiting and funding of you as a church planter in your network.

17. I believe I received adequate funding for the church plant.
More than adequate
Adequate
Barely adequate
Nearly adequate
Totally inadequate

18. Being bi-vocational impacted the success of the church plant…
Very negatively
Somewhat negatively
Somewhat positively
Very positively
NA

19. The network intentionally included my family in the recruitment process
Strongly agree
Agree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

20. I received the training I believed I needed to be an effective church planter.
Strongly agree
Agree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

21. Based on the recruiting and funding methods of the network, I would recommend others to join this network to plant churches.
Strongly agree
Agree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

APPENDIX B

Church Planting Network Leader Interview

1. How did you decide upon your primary recruiting model?
    Prompts
    -What was the deciding factor (or deciding factors) in choosing this model?
    -How effective has it been? (Quantity and quality)

2. What has been the overall satisfaction level of church planters joining your network?
    Prompts
    -are they happy and engaged in the network?
    -do they recommend the network to others?
    -how do you know (how do you measure)
    -how many dropped out or failed to launch? (define failure)

3. How did you decide upon your primary funding model?
    Prompts
    -What was the deciding factor (or deciding factors) in choosing this model?
    -How effective has it been? (Quantity and quality)

4. What has been the satisfaction level among planters in regards to the funding they received?
    Prompts
    -do church planters believe the funding is adequate to plant a new church?
    -What complaints/complements do you receive from planters regarding
        funding?
    -how do you know (how do you measure)

5. What advice would you give a new network pertaining to recruiting and funding?
    Prompts
    -why is that important
    -what would you do differently?

APPENDIX C

Church Planting Network Leader Questionnaire

1. Please describe the ways you have recruited Church Planters to join your network.

2. What is your primary recruiting method and why?

3. Please describe the different ways you have funded church planters in your network.

4. What is your primary funding model and why?

5. What difficulties or obstacles have you experienced in recruiting church planters?

6. What difficulties or obstacles have you experienced in funding church planters?

7. What do you recommend as best recruiting and funding practices for a new church planting network?

APPENDIX D

Survey Permission Letter

My name is Jeffrey Horsman. I am a Doctorate of Ministry student at Asbury Theological Seminary completing a dissertation in Recruiting and Funding Church Planters In Church Planting Networks. I am writing to ask written permission to conduct a survey with 5 church planters from your church planting network. My research is being supervised by my professor, Dr. Bryan Collier

I would like to conduct a survey of 5 current church planters who have been active in your church planting network in the past 5 years. I ask that you randomly select 5 church planters who would be willing to complete a survey consisting of 15 questions about recruiting and funding as church planters as well as 7 demographic questions (questions are attached).

This survey will be completely anonymous. It will be conducted online and I will be using Survey Monkey as the instrument. If you agree to the survey, I ask that you provide me with the email addresses of the 5 church planters you randomly select so that I may email them the link to the survey. Please notify those selected that they should expect this survey link to arrive soon.

The responses from the survey will be confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify those taking the survey. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researchers will have access to the records. Records will be destroyed within one year of the completion of the project.

If you grant permission to conduct this survey of 5 church planters from your network, please sign below and return to me:

Jeff Horsman
Jeff@crossroadschurchplanting.com
1406 W Woodland Dr.
Marion, IN, 46952

_____............................_____
Signature of Person Granting Permission for this Survey ....Date Signed

_____
Printed Name of Person Granting Permission for this Survey

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER
RECRUITING AND FUNDING CHURCH PLANTERS

You are invited to be in a research study being done by Jeffrey Horsman from the Asbury Theological Seminary. You are invited because you are a leader in a church planting network. This study examines different practices in recruiting and funding church planters in church planting networks.

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to complete and return a 7 question Church Planting Network Leader Questionnaire. Following the questionnaire, you will be asked to take part in a follow up Church Planting Network Leader Interview. This interview will either be in person at the Exponential 2019 Orlando Conference or by phone. The researcher will contact you to schedule the interview time. The interview should take no longer than 30 minutes. Questions on the questionnaire and in the interview will cover recruiting and funding church planters and the overall satisfaction of church planters. Upon completion, you will be asked to provide 5 church planters who have been involved in church planting in the past 5 year to complete a 15-question survey online.

I do not anticipate any risks to you participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. If you decide at any time you do not want to finish the study, you may stop whenever you want. Although there may be no direct benefits to you, the results of this study may assist those who are recruiting and funding church planters.

Your answers will be confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we make public, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researchers will have access to the records. If we tape-record the interview, we will destroy the tape after it has been transcribed, which we anticipate will be within two months of its taping.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

Signing this paper means that you have read this and that you agree to participate in the study. You agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done and what to do. Please sign and return to me at:

Jeff Horsman
Jeff@crossroadschurchplanting.com
1406 W Woodland Dr.
Marion, IN, 46952

_____   _____
Signature of Person Agreeing to be in the Study   Date Signed

_____
Printed Name of Person Agreeing to be in the Study

APPENDIX F

<u>Confidentiality Agreement</u>

   This form may be used for individuals who will be assisting the researcher with a variety of research tasks (e.g., audio or video recording, transcribing data, etc.)

   I, _____, will be assisting the researcher by _____(specific job description, e.g., being an interpreter/translator)

   I agree to abide by the following guidelines regarding confidentiality:

1. Hold in the strictest confidence the identification of any individual(s) that may be revealed during the course of performing research task throughout the research process and after it is complete.

2. Keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the *Researcher(s).*

3. Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) secure while it is in my possession (e.g., using a password-protected computer).

4. Return all research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) to the *Researcher(s)* when I have completed the research tasks.

5. After consulting with the *Researcher(s),* erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the *Researcher(s)* (e.g., information stored on computer hard drive) upon completion of the research tasks.

_____   _____   _____

(Print Name)   (Signature)   (Date)

Researcher(s)

_____   _____   _____

(Print Name)   (Signature)   (Date)

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