

GALEN CURRAH AND
PATRICK O'CONNOR

start
churches,
now!



START
churches
NOW!



GALEN CURRAH AND
PATRICK O'CONNOR

Copyright © 2011, 2012, 2013 by Galen Currah and
Patrick O'Connor

This booklet may be freely reproduced,
translated and distributed.

Language versions:

English

French

Kiswahili

Kwacha

Nepali

Spanish

Thai

Download from www.StartAChurchNow.com
or from www.scm-action.org

For additional copies contact Patrick O'Connor:
poc2020min@gmail.com



Although this book focuses on small house churches, we praise the Lord for those big churches that stand as firm, long-term lights for the Good News in communities throughout the world. Yet, for every big, God-honoring church, our world also needs hundreds of little churches.

In collaboration with



PEOPLE OF YES!

www.peopleofyes.com

Contents

Foreword

Introduction3

Ten Guiding Principles

Principle 1: Think small!.....	5
Principle 2: Act urgently!	11
Principle 3: Keep it biblical!.....	15
Principle 4: Keep it simple!.....	23
Principle 5: Obey Jesus before all else ...	27
Principle 6: Train leaders	31
Principle 7: Expect reproduction!	35
Principle 8: Avoid obstacles!	39
Principle 9: Remain yourselves!.....	44
Principle 10: Stay focused!	47

A practical church-planters’ training “menu”

25 church planting activities	51
30 Scripture texts	55

Appendices

Checklist of New Testament “one-another” commands.....	75
Elephantine churches and rabbitine churches	81
Watch out for wolves!.....	85
Share your authority with your disciples...	89
Mister Tradition	95
Four Church-Planting Models	99
Maintain simplicity in worship	103
Mentor new leaders.....	107
Make disciples	111
Employ role-play.....	115
Tell stories and act out skits	117
Appoint regional, church-planting coordinators.....	121

Foreword

This is a powerful book filled with simple, practical wisdom. The language is easy to translate and communicate.

The Best Practices here are not for the timid or faint hearted. These directions are for those of us committed to a “whatever it takes” approach to creating multiplying chains of new congregations that are Biblical, powerful, and effective in expanding the Kingdom.

Galen Currah and Patrick O’Connor combine experiences from Latin America, Asia, and Africa to synthesize lessons with global application, proven by years of actual experience to be effective.

Proven by practitioners, *Start Churches Now!* is not written from an armchair, but by guys who are in towns, villages, high rises, slums, and communities.

This is not just a “poor people” or “rural mission field” text, but one with equal applicability in high

rise cities, suburban neighborhoods, small towns, and among remote, unreached peoples.

There are countless scripture references. Rest assured that what you have in hand is a Biblically-based set of instructions to create a Biblical movement.

Several sections are compilations of check lists that allow a menu driven approach. Rather than arbitrarily setting up a chronology of teachings, the format allows any practitioner to familiarize him/her self with content and then, as the situation demands, refer to Biblical answers to any question or obstacle that arises.

The authors modestly do not include examples of their own utilization of these methods. However, on several continents, strong, healthy, multiplying “chains of new churches” have resulted from their own application of the wisdom they have distilled for us.

The vocabulary is simple. I was struck by how little of the vocabulary I learned while gaining several seminary degrees is found here. This is not a theoretical treatise on the philosophy of creating

new congregations. It is an easy to use handbook for grass roots practitioners, designed for anyone with access to oral or written scripture.

It is not focused on distinctive linguistic, cultural, religious or ethnic peculiarities. Generic in that everything comes either directly from scripture or from their experience of applying scripture in a multitude of countries. Principles derived from scripture are applicable everywhere.

Written in simple, direct, declarative sentences, it is amazingly similar in style to the four Gospels. As someone said, “Jesus does not give suggestions.” Neither did Paul. When giving advice to new churches, Paul simply quoted from either the Old Testament or the testimony of Jesus. He gave clear directives. I guarantee that some traditionalists may object to a few of the Biblical admonitions herein, but no reader will be able to say they do not understand the scriptural practices.

May the Lord extend His Kingdom!

Bill Smith

VP Director of Church Planting
East-West Ministries (USA), retired

Introduction

It is urgent that you make disciples. Often this is realized through new churches. Not churches like you have known before, but many, little, self-multiplying churches that can grow fast without much money. This urgency arises from several facts:

- Many people in your country are coming to faith in Jesus, and they need many churches that will help them grow in obedience to Jesus, in their own culture.
- Natural disasters and human-caused emergencies require many, little churches that can help their members and neighbors, spiritually and materially.
- Governments and rebels in many lands are shutting down big churches, such that only little, secret ones can survive and grow.

- Many big churches have abandoned faith in Jesus Christ and the Holy Bible, so many new churches are needed.
- It is little churches that best multiply rapidly amongst seekers and new believers, without money or wealth.
- It is little churches that best experience the kind of agreement in prayer that God promises to answer.
- It is little churches that provide with simplicity the experience of Jesus in their midst that he promised.
- It is in little churches that all believers can serve one another with their gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Many, little churches can transform your society, bringing many to obedience to Jesus.
- Jesus Christ has given authority to make disciples. Therefore, you and your friends

can start churches by teaching others how to obey together his commandments.

- It is normal that healthy churches reproduce often.

The authors offer some lessons they have learned from their experiences in many countries. We present ten principles and other lessons that you can follow and teach to others.

While this is not an exhaustive theological and missiological treatise, we do implore you to “go therefore and make disciples,” which is often realized through new small churches.

Ten Guiding Principles

Principle 1: Think small!



What can your little house church do?

1. Benefit from each other's spiritual gifts as all serve one another. Some spiritual gifts help believers speak words of encouragement from God's Spirit; other gifts help believers serve each other in practical ways. 1 Cor. 14:24-26
2. Show unconditional love to each other in an intimate community, as they serve, teach, help, counsel, and encourage one another. John 13:34-35

3. Transform their character and create hope for themselves by helping each other repent when wrong, forgive when wronged, pray for each other, and teach one another from the New Testament. Col. 3:12-13
4. Claim Jesus' authority over darkness and temptation by praying to God in Jesus' name while resisting together Satan's lies and temptation. John 16:23-24
5. Make the promises of God come true as they agree with one another when they pray to God in faith. (Many find that praying privately in big churches does not bring the same result.) 2 Cor. 1:19-20
6. Tap into God's great power by obeying Jesus' commandments, in the same way that Jesus' first followers did. Believers must continually teach each other how to obey Jesus in practical ways. Matt. 18:18-20
7. Maintain their cultural identity and values while serving Jesus together. Only stop cultural practices that God says are evil or useless. 1 Cor. 6:9-11

8. Avoid trouble from hostile political and religious authorities. Keep churches small; have them employ low-profile methods, move location often and stay within their culture. 1 Cor. 10:32-33
9. Experience the real presence of Jesus through answered prayers, the Lord's Table, testimonials, forgiven sins, and the frequent filling of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 10:16

What should your little house church avoid doing?

- *Impersonal church "services."* As you gather in little churches, you can see and speak with one another, making everyone welcome and showing kindness to all.
- *Religious discrimination.* Persons from any ethnic and religious background can worship Jesus in new little churches. Your friends, family and neighbors can come without fear into your little church.

- *Passively watching and listening.* Everyone can participate actively in a little church, if they wish.
- *Non-relevant sermons.* Leaders of little churches are your own friends. You can talk freely about anything helpful for your walk with the Lord.
- *Expensive buildings, equipment and employees.* Since new little churches do not cost any money, you can use your money to help the poor and needy.
- *Theological controversy.* In little churches, you learn Jesus' teachings and follow the New Testament, while avoiding disputes over minor, less vital, questions. Small churches focus on how to follow Jesus, their Savior, Lord and Friend, rather than on denominational rules.
- *Doubts about truth and reality.* As you experience the truths that Jesus taught, your faith, love, and hope grow.

- *Unnecessary visibility.* in times of persecution. Jesus said that you should flee persecution, if you can. Small house churches often help to do so.

Discuss together

In what ways do these ideas fit the Bible?

How can your church apply these concepts immediately?

Whom will you train to apply these ideas?

Principle 2: Act urgently!

Why the urgency?

1. Traditional churches cost too much to start and maintain. Where thousands are turning in faith to Jesus, hundreds of new home churches must be started, now. Many believers cannot afford big churches, or they prefer to use their money to help the poor and needy.
2. False religions and philosophies are spreading fast, and there are not enough churches. Our task is not to control society nor to become a dominant religion, but to saturate society with Christian faith and love. To do so, we must keep on starting many new little churches.
3. Believers oftentimes leave big churches, but still desire to belong to a church. Many famous church leaders have lost their faith or have violated God's laws. Others cannot

make their big churches interesting or helpful to others. We must form believers into little churches that help them love Jesus and obey his commandments.

4. Oftentimes, unbelievers distrust big churches, but many will come into a little one. In many lands journalists, actors and false religious leaders have so slandered the churches that we must provide many little churches in which people can learn the truth about Jesus.
5. Existing churches cannot absorb many new believers. Big churches do not have enough seats, enough classes or enough teachers to help many new believers. So it is better to start many new little churches with new believers.
6. Many governments seek to suppress highly-visible churches. Countries that have an official religion or a totalitarian politic stop big churches growing. Therefore believers must start many new little churches that can stay invisible and change location when they must.

7. New leaders emerge faster in new, little churches. Big churches and Bible schools cannot train enough new leaders. In contrast, new little churches help many ordinary laity become effective leaders who can help train newer leaders, in turn.

8. Jesus' followers who are inside other religions need their own new churches. Today, many thousands of Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and animists are becoming followers of Jesus without leaving their religious community. These can start new little churches with other new followers of Jesus.

9. New little churches win proportionately more new believers than do big churches. Little churches can easily double in size every year, and they can reproduce every year. Unbelievers who visit little churches often choose to become Jesus' followers.



10. Little churches are often more enjoyable, and they train disciples faster. Sharing with others face-to-face is more enjoyable for most participants.

Principle 3: Keep it biblical!

What is required to start a house church?

X **Registration or incorporation with a government.** Some governments require all organizations to register. If your government would seek to persecute you, then you should not register. While you do obey the laws of your country, sometimes you must worship secretly or unofficially. Matt. 10:21-23

X **A chapel or meeting hall.** It is usually a good idea to start a new church in one of its members' homes, or in any other place where members feel comfortable and safe. Rom. 16:3-5





An ordained or licensed clergyman.

New churches need a volunteer leader or two, but no “official” clergyman is required. Lay leaders who love God, the Bible and others can provide leadership for your new church. Trained clergy, of course, are not prohibited; they are simply not required. Acts 14:23



Authorization from an older church.

While it is advisable to get the blessing from a “mother church,” no other permission is required than what Jesus said: “Go!” If you do have the blessing and authorization of an older church, then stay connected with that church.



A big-money budget. New house churches cost no money. Members can and should sometimes give money or other things to help the poor or to support an agreed-upon project. Acts 2:44-45





Gifted members who can help others.

You need gifted members. Happily, every church member who has faith in Jesus receives a special gift from God's Holy Spirit and is able to help others. 1 Cor. 12:7



New believers, who are baptized.

Jesus commanded his followers to baptize all who repent. Any church can do so, even your church. All those you baptize become members of your church the same day. Acts 2:38-41



The Lord's Supper. Your new church must celebrate the Lord's table often, allowing believers to commune with the Lord. No special qualifications are required of those who serve the Eucharist. Communion is powerful, but it is not magic. Matt. 26:26-28



Public meetings. Though it may oftentimes be quite enjoyable and even safe (depending on your country) to gather publicly as believers, such open services are not required. Indeed, small, quiet new gatherings between three and 23 can serve the context of new churches favorably. Col. 4:15



Skilled musicians. It is always better to worship in ways that everyone can participate in and imitate, using local cultural forms. 1 Cor. 14:26



Long sermons. Jesus and his apostles left us a good example to follow. They mostly held discussions, told stories and referred to their Bible. 1 Cor. 12:7-11



Teaching expressed creatively. While sermons may be the preferred form in many cultures, we see plainly that Jesus and his apostles left us a good example to follow through the use of discussions and interest-holding, story-telling. Matt. 7:24-27



New believers from other religions. As persons from other religions put their faith in Jesus and start their own new churches, we see that faith in Jesus is a new way of life for such new believers. It is perfectly legitimate for those in other religions who put their faith in Jesus to start their own churches. Acts 15:19-20



Followers of Jesus. Jesus commanded his followers to help others to also follow Him. They do so by telling the Good News about Jesus, baptizing those who repent, and teaching them to obey all his commandments. Matt. 28:18-20



Remember, while large churches meet a vital need in big cities, providing a contemporary format and a variety of competent ministries, these require government registration, buildings, budgets and staff. Where populations remain ignorant of the Good News, the need is for small, quickly reproducing “rabbit churches” that can avoid weighty organizational details. Big churches can plant many little churches in which the unsaved can meet the Lord and be formed quickly into his loving, obedient disciples while meeting only biblical requirements.

Discuss together

What New Testament practices must we require of new churches?

What non-biblical requirements should we remove from new churches?

In what ways can we protect our new churches from hostile authorities?

Principle 4: Keep it simple!

How to start a new little church?

1. **Pray often to Jesus.** Jesus will guide you through the steps. He has promised that he would build his “church,” and he sent his Holy Spirit to help them grow. 
2. **Ask a more-experienced church-starter to coach you.** There are many others like you who have more experience, and some would be willing to give you advice and counsel.
3. **Invite a few friends, relatives and neighbors to come together** to learn about Jesus. Most new little churches start with ordinary people who know and trust each other. You can start with as few as two or three.

4. **Review together the life and teachings of Jesus.** Start by helping everyone learn the original Good News that Jesus and his apostles taught everywhere they went. It is the story of his life, miracles, death, resurrection, appearance, commandments and promises.
5. **Help others to repent from evil and to trust in Jesus** to forgive them and to give them eternal life. Whenever others become new believers, show them how to share the Good News with their families and friends. Baptize them and their family as soon as they are willing.
6. **Agree on times and places to meet** in small groups that are little churches. Each new little church can gather anywhere, on any day of the week, and at any time that is convenient for its members—even if it is inconvenient for you.
7. **Learn and obey Jesus' commandments.** The Lord Jesus gave more than a hundred commands. The following are the main ones that the early believers practiced together:

Jesus' basic commandments

- Honor God together (“Love the Lord God with all your heart”).
- Show love to each other, to neighbors, to the poor and to enemies.
- Baptize all who repent and want to follow Jesus.
- Break bread together often. That is, celebrate communion, the Lord’s Table.
- Give generously to help the poor and those who work hard for Jesus.
- Pray together often, using Jesus’ name, for all kinds of needs.
- Serve others together with the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given to you and to all other church members.
- Abide in His word.

Discuss together

What methods have proven helpful in starting new churches?

What methods have proven obstacles to starting new churches?

Principle 5: Obey Jesus before all else



What do members of new little churches do when they gather?

1. **Worship God and honor Jesus Christ together.** Many believers, for example, like to sing to God, to tell each other how Jesus has recently helped them, to act out Bible stories, or to dance with joy. Do only what your culture allows. John 4:23-24

2. **Read from the Bible.** Study together parts of the Bible and lead everyone in a discussion about the text, especially from the Gospels and the New Testament. To demonstrate and enhance the teaching of Scripture, have children and adults act out Bible stories with simplicity. Decide together how the church members will obey the text, together. 1 Tim. 4:13

3. **Pray in Jesus' name.** Ask God to help with every member's needs and thank Him for the ways in which he helps them. Pray for the sick to get well, for the oppressed to get free, for the needy, and for more families to become followers of Jesus. John 16:23-26

4. **Celebrate the Lord's Table.** Break and eat bread together to remember Jesus' crucified body, and drink something appropriate to remember Jesus' blood that cleanses away sin. Do this often and let everyone have time to experience communion with Jesus. Acts 2:42

5. **Share with each other.** Encourage each one to meet the needs of others, serving

each other in practical ways. Let them give money for urgent needs of the poor. Acts 2:42-47

6. **Send out workers.** Appoint and send those who want to help others learn about Jesus. Empower them to start more new little churches. Hear their reports when they return. Let them train others to do the same kind of work. Acts 13:2
7. **Ask God for His help.** Pray to God to honor Jesus by helping others in ways that only God can do. Let Him transform the wicked into the righteous. Let Him heal the sick and deliver the oppressed. Let Him provide for others beyond what you yourselves are able to do. Luke 10:5-9

Discuss together

Which of these seven worship activities need to be strengthened in your new churches?

What are some culturally-appropriate ways in which to do so?

Principle 6: Train leaders

How to raise up leaders for new house churches?

1. **Recognize shepherds.** As your church starts to meet, watch for members who help others participate actively. If they are willing to become a leader, then arrange to coach them between gatherings, and help them plan how they will lead their own new gathering.



2. **Mentor shepherds.** Whenever someone is able to gather others together to learn about Jesus, arrange to coach that leader. Call them leaders or shepherds; do not yet call them pastors or elders.

3. **Listen to shepherds.** Each time you meet with new leaders, listen carefully as each one reports on what their little church has been doing, what it needs and what are its opportunities. Jesus did this, Mark 6:30f.
4. **Train shepherds how to make plans.** Help each leader learn from the New Testament how to plan how to lead their church, and how to bring others to learn about Jesus.
5. **Pray with shepherds.** Intercede with God on behalf of leaders' church members, that God will transform them to be more like Jesus, that God will draw more persons to become followers of Jesus, and that He will raise up more new leaders.



6. **Empower shepherds.** Authorize new leaders to coach newer leaders for other new little churches, as the apostles did in the New Testament. See 2 Timothy 2:1-2.
7. **Name shepherds as elders or as new shepherds-in-training.** When leaders meet the requirements of the New Testament, name them as elders or pastors. Do so in a church gathering by laying your hands upon them.
8. **Educate elders.** Provide occasional training seminars for leaders and elders, and keep yourself available to advise them whenever they ask for your help.
9. **Follow a training menu.** Keep a set of lessons that all new leaders need to learn. Provide these lessons and a “menu” to all who train others, in turn. See www.Paul-Timothy.net

Principle 7: Expect reproduction!

How will your church keep growing and reproducing?

1. Keep on obeying the commandments of Jesus. God normally brings new believers into churches that obey his Messiah Jesus. Disciples are those who lovingly obey Jesus' commands. See Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 2:37-47.
2. Ensure that all the church members participate freely. Where all the believers speak to each other about Jesus, unbelievers who visit the church will become convinced that they themselves are sinners. See 1 Corinthians 14:3, 24-26.
3. Have the believers in every little church ask God often to help them reproduce, start new little churches, and raise up new leaders in

new churches. Teach them that it is normal for every living church to reproduce.

4. Let members invite friends and relatives to visit their little church, if they would feel comfortable doing so. If the regular members of the little church become too many then let some of them start another little church along with those who wish to do so.
5. Recount the original Good News often and invite people to repent and trust Jesus. It is by hearing the Good News that persons often come to repent and believe. See Luke 24:45-49 and Romans 10:14-15.
6. Pray together often for others to come to faith in Jesus. Where possible, let two or three believers walk together in your city, praying quietly for God to show his kindness to unbelievers. Train them to tell the Good News to any who ask them.
7. Have others take turns leading the church gatherings. Ask God to let others become good leaders. When they feel ready, let

them start a new church with any of the believers who want to go with them.

8. Start new little churches in the homes of seekers and new believers. Help local men to take the lead and teach about Jesus to their own households and friends. Coach them in the background and let them draw in their own friends and families.
9. Train all church members in how to start a church. When church members must move away for work, for school or for marriage, they should know how to start a new little church. Promise to mentor them, if you can.
10. Set up “chains” of leaders who train newer leaders. You cannot start new little churches any faster than you can train leaders. Mentor a few leaders and authorize each of them to mentor a few others, in turn. Keep these chains growing by starting many new little churches, as many “links” in long chains of new churches.
11. Help conventional churches to form their members into many little churches. Some

big churches want to have many little churches, and their leaders may ask you to help them learn how to do so.

12. Hold training workshops for workers who want to start churches. Let them form temporary little churches amongst themselves, so that they can go out and do the same with other people, in turn.

Principle 8: Avoid obstacles!

What dangers await your house churches, right now?

1. Some leaders from big churches may despise you and your churches. If they oppose you, then tell them why you start little churches, and how your churches try to obey Jesus' commandments.
2. Some new little churches will not last more than a few months. Some members will want to go into big churches; others will leave to start more new little churches. Let them do so.
3. Since little churches cannot afford to support their leaders financially, such leaders must work bi-vocationally to earn their living.



4. Someone else may try to take control of the little churches. “Wolves” are those who do not start new churches, yet they want others to follow them. You will have to tell wolves to stop coming to your new little church. Offer to coach them, if they will go start their own little churches.
5. Some persons may try to teach the little church untrue or unbalanced ideas. So, help new churches make the New Testament their only standard, and help their members to test every idea by learning what the NT says and retaining it. See Luke 8:15.
6. Someone may want to become the only teacher in a church. From the start, allow everyone to speak one to another. Instruct believers to recognize each other’s spiritual

gifts. Church members should never become mere passive listeners.

7. Government authorities may try to stop your church, they may even arrest you. In some hostile regions, those who start churches may have to break the law in order to obey their Lord Jesus. However, to obey Jesus is more important than safety. Never violate laws unless your loving obedience to Jesus requires you to do so.
8. The devil may tempt you yourself to become a “wolf” who seeks power over other churches. You must often ask the Lord to reveal any bad motives you have, to forgive you your sins, and to fill you with his Holy Spirit and with grace to obey him.

Discuss together

What dangers have we faced in our new churches?

How did we deal with those dangers?

Principle 9: Remain yourselves!



How to respond to a society that opposes Jesus' followers?

1. Stay in your culture. Wear your society's normal attire, keep your own names, eat only what your society approves as food, use your society's greetings, and respect your society's feasts, fasts and holidays.
2. Worship in an inoffensive way. Employ as many of your society's religious forms as you can with a clear conscience. Avoid most foreign forms of worship. Jesus accepts

most kinds of worship that honor him. John 4:23.

3. Limit your main worship activities to those taught in the New Testament. These include learning Jesus' teachings, praying in his name, "breaking bread" and sharing one with another. See Acts 2:42.
4. Search in the New Testament to find answers to your society's questions and needs, and affirm any of your culture's values that Jesus would approve.
5. Pray that thousands and millions in your society will become followers of Jesus, even if many of these stay in their parents' religion for a time.
6. Avoid having many foreigners attend your churches and worship events. Normally, outsiders should not teach in your new church. If some foreigners mentor you and other leaders, then have them do so privately.
7. Refuse financial aid. Some rich believers and some foreigners may want to supply

you with money and material aid. If you can support yourselves, then decline their help.

8. Appoint only respected local leaders. It is better that foreigners or outsiders not lead new little churches. While some outsiders may be good mentors and teachers, local persons should lead new churches.
9. Seek an active, profound spirituality. Above all else, become known for your power through prayer, for your honest, moral behavior, and for your ability to honor God in your daily conversation.
10. Be like the mustard seed. Keep your churches secret as long as you can. Let Jesus alone choose when he wants any of you to grow, to be arrested or to suffer for him.
11. Move gathering places as often as needed. When hostile authorities suppress some little churches, the others can keep on worshiping.

Principle 10: Stay focused!



What is the Good News that Jesus told us to announce everywhere?

1. The “Gospel” or Good News about Jesus Christ is a narrative of true, historical facts. Recount this true story in words, song, poetry, art or drama. Explain Jesus’ promises in simple words. Invite others to start obeying Jesus by repenting of their sins, putting their faith in him, and getting baptized.
2. The original Good News story is summarized in New Testament texts like these: Luke

24:44-49; Acts 2:22-40; Acts 3:13-26; Acts 5:29-32; Acts 10:34-48; Acts 13:23-41; Acts 17:1-4; Acts 17:22-31; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; 2 Corinthians 5:21

3. Recount the Good News through culturally-acceptable media, emphasizing those points that make sense to local people. The most prominent truths across all New Testament texts dealing with the Good News remain Jesus' life, death and His return to life. Emphasize these truths.

4. Include this:
 - Ancient prophets predicted a Coming One, whom the Jews called Messiah.

 - God empowered Jesus to perform miracles, freeing people from Satan's power, showing that he is Messiah.

 - Jealous religious leaders and political authorities executed Jesus by nailing Him to a wooden cross.

- The third day afterwards, Jesus physically rose back to life and came out of his tomb.
- Jesus appeared to eye-witnesses, proving it was He, ordering them to tell this Good News everywhere.
- Jesus promised to forgive all who repent and believe, and to free them from every kind of evil.
- All who trust and obey Jesus receive God's forgiveness, His Holy Spirit, and eternal life.
- Jesus went up into the sky and thus reigns as Lord over heaven and earth.
- He ordered his followers to baptize new believers and to teach them to obey his commands.
- Jesus will one day return to earth, raise the dead and reign as King over the world forever.

5. As soon as anyone repents from their old ways and puts their belief and trust in Jesus, you should do for them exactly what Jesus and the apostles did: (a) Confirm their repentance by baptizing them, as Jesus commanded (Mt 28:18-20); and (b) Add them to a new, little church, as the apostles did (Acts 2:40-42).

6. In new regions where there are no churches, when a family or friends become followers of Jesus together, (a) form them immediately into a new little church, and (b) have them invite others to learn about Jesus with them.

A practical church-planters' training "menu"

Instruct church planters in the following 25 activities, based on their context and needs. Note the corresponding number for each activity, which refers to the 30 related Bible texts that follow. Learn together from those texts. Have apprentices review one Bible text daily, until they know and apply them well. Use these themes as a "tick list" or menu with your trainees.

25 church-planting activities

1. Send workers: 1
2. Receive Jesus' authority: 4
3. Work without pay: 8
4. Enter houses: 9
5. Preach: 23
6. Announce Jesus' power: 22
7. Announce Jesus' death: 23
8. Announce Jesus has risen: 23
9. Announce Jesus' return: 16
10. Cast out evil spirits: 11
11. Have correct perspective: 11



12. Heal the sick: 22
13. Be filled with the Holy Spirit: 14
14. Repent & believe: 25
15. Baptize new believers: 17
16. Love God and others: 5
17. Forgive each other: 23
18. Pray: 18
19. Take communion: 26
20. Make disciples: 27
21. Obey God: 19
22. Start new flocks: 24
23. Teach novice shepherds: 28
24. Appoint elders: 24
25. Beware of enemies: 30

30 Scripture texts

1. Instruct and send workers

Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and every sickness... These twelve men were sent out by Jesus with the following instructions: “Do not go to any Gentile territory or any Samaritan towns. Instead, you are to go to the lost sheep of the people of Israel. Go and preach, ‘The Kingdom of heaven is near!’ Heal the sick, bring the dead back to life, heal those who suffer from dreaded skin diseases, and drive out demons. You have received without paying, so give without being paid. Do not carry any gold, silver, or copper money in your pockets; do not carry a beggar’s bag for the trip or an extra shirt or shoes or a walking stick. Workers should be given what they need. Matthew 10:1-10

2. Enter houses of peace

‘When you come to a town or village, go in and look for someone who is willing to welcome

you, and stay with him until you leave that place. When you go into a house, say, 'Peace be with you.' If the people in that house welcome you, let your greeting of peace remain; but if they do not welcome you, then take back your greeting. And if some home or town will not welcome you or listen to you, then leave that place and shake the dust off your feet. I assure you that on the Judgment Day God will show more mercy to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah than to the people of that town!' Matthew 10:11-15

3. Beware of hostile authorities

'Listen! I am sending you out just like sheep to a pack of wolves. You must be as cautious as snakes and as gentle as doves. Watch out, for there will be those who will arrest you and take you to court, and they will whip you in the synagogues. For my sake you will be brought to trial before rulers and kings, to tell the Good News to them and to the Gentiles. When they bring you to trial, do not worry about what you are going to say or how you will say it; when the time comes, you will be given what you will say. For the words you will speak will not be yours; they will come from the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.' Matthew 10:16-20

4. Exercise godly authority

‘And so I tell all of you: what you prohibit on earth will be prohibited in heaven, and what you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven. ‘And I tell you more: whenever two of you on earth agree about anything you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them.’ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, ‘Lord, if my brother keeps on sinning against me, how many times do I have to forgive him? Seven times?’ ‘No, not seven times,’ answered Jesus, ‘but seventy times seven.’ Matthew 18:18-22

5. Love God and others

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they came together, and one of them, a teacher of the Law, tried to trap Him with a question. ‘Teacher,’ he asked, ‘which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ Jesus answered, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and the most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like it: ‘Love

your neighbour as you love yourself.’ The whole Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets depend on these two commandments.’
Matthew 22:34-40

6. Teach believers to obey Jesus

The eleven disciples went to the hill in Galilee where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him, even though some of them doubted. Jesus drew near and said to them, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age.’ Matthew 28:16-20

7. Train volunteer workers

Jesus called the twelve disciples together and sent them out two by two. He gave them authority over the evil spirits and ordered them, ‘Don’t take anything with you on the trip except a walking stick. Take no bread, no beggar’s bag, no money in your pockets. Wear sandals, but don’t carry

an extra shirt.' He also told them, 'Wherever you are welcomed, stay in the same house until you leave that place. If you come to a town where people do not welcome you or will not listen to you, leave it and shake the dust off your feet. That will be a warning to them!' So they went out and preached that people should turn away from their sins... The apostles returned and met with Jesus, and told Him all they had done and taught. Mark 6:7-12, 30

8. Maintain simplicity

Jesus called the twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases. Then he sent them out to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick, after saying to them, 'Take nothing with you for the trip: no walking stick, no beggar's bag, no food, no money, not even an extra shirt. Wherever you are welcomed, stay in the same house until you leave that town; wherever people don't welcome you, leave that town and shake the dust off your feet as a warning to them.' The disciples left and travelled through all the villages, preaching the Good News and healing people everywhere. Luke 9:1-6

9. Find responsive people

After this the Lord chose another seventy-two men and sent them out two by two, to go ahead of Him to every town and place where he himself was about to go. He said to them, 'There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. Go! I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Don't take a purse or a beggar's bag or shoes; don't stop to greet anyone on the road. Whenever you go into a house, first say, 'Peace be with this house.' If someone who is peace-loving lives there let your greeting of peace remain on that person; if not, take back your greeting of peace. Stay in that same house, eating and drinking whatever they offer you, for workers should be given their pay. Don't move around from one house to another. Luke 10:1-7

10. Warn with truth

Whenever you go into a town and are made welcome, eat what is set before you, heal the sick in that town, and say to the people there, 'The Kingdom of God has come near

you.’ But whenever you go into a town and are not welcomed, go out in the streets and say, ‘Even the dust from your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. But remember that the Kingdom of God has come near you!’
Luke 10:8-11

11. Keep the correct perspective

The seventy-two men came back in great joy. ‘Lord,’ they said, ‘even the demons obeyed us when we gave them a command in your name!’ Jesus answered them, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Listen! I have given you authority, so that you can walk on snakes and scorpions and overcome all the power of the Enemy, and nothing will hurt you. But don’t be glad because the evil spirits obey you; rather be glad because your names are written in heaven.’ Luke 10:17-20

12. Reap a harvest

‘My food,’ Jesus said to them, ‘is to obey the will of the one who sent me and to finish the work he gave me to do. You have a saying, ‘Four more months and then the harvest.’ But I tell

you, take a good look at the fields; the crops are now ripe and ready to be harvested! The one who reaps the harvest is being paid and gathers the crops for eternal life; so the one who plants and the one who reaps will be glad together. For the saying is true, 'Someone plants, someone else reaps.' I have sent you to reap a harvest in a field where you did not work; others worked there, and you profit from their work.'
John 4:34-38

13. Love one another

I love you just as the Father loves me; remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. 'I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My commandment is this: love one another, just as I love you. The greatest love you can have for your friends is to give your life for them. And you are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because servants do not know what their master is doing. Instead, I call you friends, because I have told you everything I heard from

my Father. You did not choose me; I chose you and appointed you to go and bear much fruit, the kind of fruit that endures. And so the Father will give you whatever you ask of Him in my name. This, then, is what I command you: love one another. John 15:9-17

14. Receive the Holy Spirit

It was late that Sunday evening, and the disciples were gathered together behind locked doors, because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities. Then Jesus came and stood among them. 'Peace be with you,' he said. After saying this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy at seeing the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you.' Then he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. John 20:19-22

15. Follow Jesus' strategy

Jesus said to them, 'The times and occasions are set by my Father's own authority, and it is not for you to know when they will be. But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled

with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’ After saying this, he was taken up to heaven as they watched him, and a cloud hid Him from their sight. They still had their eyes fixed on the sky as he went away, when two men dressed in white suddenly stood beside them 1 and said, ‘Galileans, why are you standing there looking up at the sky’ This Jesus, who was taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw Him go to heaven.’ Acts 1:7-11

16. Tell the Good News

“Listen to these words, fellow Israelites! Jesus of Nazareth was a man whose divine authority was clearly proven to you by all the miracles and wonders which God performed through him. You yourselves know this, for it happened here among you. In accordance with his own plan God had already decided that Jesus would be handed over to you; and you killed Him by letting sinful men crucify him. But God raised Him from death, setting Him free from its power, because it was impossible that death should hold Him prisoner.” Acts 2:22-24

17. Baptize those who repent

Peter said to them, 'Each one of you must turn away from your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God's gift, the Holy Spirit. For God's promise was made to you and your children, and to all who are far away' all whom the Lord our God calls to himself.' Peter made his appeal to them and with many other words he urged them, saying, 'Save yourselves from the punishment coming on this wicked people!' Many of them believed his message and were baptized, and about three thousand people were added to the group that day. Acts 2:38-41



18. Teach believers to worship

They spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship, and sharing in the fellowship meals and the prayers. Many miracles and wonders were being done through the apostles, and everyone was filled with awe. All the believers continued together in close fellowship and shared their belongings with one another. They would sell their property and

possessions, and distribute the money among all, according to what each one needed. Day after day they met as a group in the Temple, and they had their meals together in their homes, eating with glad and humble hearts, praising God, and enjoying the good will of all the people. And every day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved. Acts 2:42-47

19. Obey God instead of people

They brought the apostles in, made them stand before the Council, and the High Priest questioned them. 'We gave you strict orders not to teach in the name of this man,' he said; 'but see what you have done! You have spread your teaching all over Jerusalem, and you want to make us responsible for his death!' Peter and the other apostles answered, 'We must obey God, not men. The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from death, after you had killed Him by nailing Him to a cross. God raised Him to his right side as Leader and Saviour, to give the people of Israel the opportunity to repent and have their sins forgiven. We are witnesses to these things, we and the Holy Spirit, who is God's gift to those who obey him.' Acts 5:27-32

20. Enter into others' homes

The following day Peter arrived in Caesarea, where Cornelius was waiting for him, together with relatives and close friends that he had invited. As Peter was about to go in, Cornelius met him, fell at his feet, and bowed down before him. But Peter made him rise. 'Stand up,' he said, 'I myself am only a man.' Peter kept on talking to Cornelius as he went into the house, where he found many people gathered. He said to them, 'You yourselves know very well that a Jew is not allowed by his religion to visit or associate with Gentiles. But God has shown me that I must not consider any person ritually unclean or defiled. And so when you sent for me, I came without any objection. Acts 10:24-29

21. Go to those whom God has prepared

Cornelius said, 'It was about this time three days ago that I was praying in my house at three o'clock in the afternoon. Suddenly a man dressed in shining clothes stood in front of me and said: 'Cornelius! God has heard your prayer and has taken notice of your works of charity. Send someone to Joppa for a man whose full

name is Simon Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner of leather, who lives by the sea.’ And so I sent for you at once, and you have been good enough to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God, waiting to hear anything that the Lord has instructed you to say.’ Acts 10:30-33

22. Tell others about Jesus’ power

Peter began to speak: ‘I now realize that it is true that God treats everyone on the same basis. Those who fear him and do what is right are acceptable to him, no matter what race they belong to. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, proclaiming the Good News of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. You know of the great event that took place throughout the land of Israel, beginning in Galilee after John preached his message of baptism. You know about Jesus of Nazareth and how God poured out on him the Holy Spirit and power. He went everywhere, doing good and healing all who were under the power of the Devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses of everything that he did in the land of Israel and in Jerusalem. Acts 10:34-38

23. Proclaim Jesus' death and resurrection

Then they put Him to death by nailing Him to a cross. But God raised Him from death three days later and caused Him to appear, not to everyone, but only to the witnesses that God had already chosen, that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after he rose from death. And he commanded us to preach the gospel to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God has appointed judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets spoke about him, saying that all who believe in Him will have their sins forgiven through the power of his name.' Acts 10:39-43

24. Appoint elders in new flocks

Paul and Barnabas preached the Good News in Derbe and won many disciples. Then they went back to Lystra, to Iconium, and on to Antioch in Pisidia. They strengthened the believers and encouraged them to remain true to the faith. 'We must pass through many troubles to enter the Kingdom of God,' they taught. In each church they appointed elders, and with prayers and fasting they commended them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. Acts 14:21-23

25. Lead people to believe and obey

The Good News was promised long ago by God through his prophets, as written in the Holy Scriptures. It is about his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: as to his humanity, he was born a descendant of David; as to his divine holiness, he was shown with great power to be the Son of God by being raised from death. Through Him God gave me the privilege of being an apostle for the sake of Christ, in order to lead people of all nations to believe and obey. This also includes you who are in Rome, whom God has called to belong to Jesus Christ. And so I write to all of you in Rome whom God loves and has called to be his own people: May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.
Romans 1:2-7

26. Break bread together

I speak to you as sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup we use in the Lord's Supper and for which we give thanks to God: when we drink from it, we are sharing in the blood of Christ. And the bread we break: when we eat it, we are sharing in the body of Christ.

Because there is the one loaf of bread, all of us, though many, are one body, for we all share the same loaf. For I received from the Lord the teaching that I passed on to you: that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and said, 'This is my body, which is for you. Do this in memory of me.' In the same way, after the supper he took the cup and said, 'This cup is God's new covenant, sealed with my blood. Whenever you drink it, do so in memory of me.' This means that every time you eat this bread and drink from this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 1 Corinthians 10:15-17; 11:23-26

27. Let new leaders train others

As for you, my son, be strong through the grace that is ours in union with Christ Jesus. Take the teachings that you heard me proclaim in the presence of many witnesses, and entrust them to reliable people, who will be able to teach others also. Take your part in suffering, as a loyal soldier of Christ Jesus. A soldier on active duty wants to please his commanding officer and so does not get mixed up in the affairs of civilian life. An athlete who runs in a race cannot win the prize

unless he obeys the rules. The farmer who has done the hard work should have the first share of the harvest. Think about what I am saying, because the Lord will enable you to understand it all. Remember Jesus Christ, who was raised from death, who was a descendant of David, as is taught in the Good News I preach. Because I preach the Good News, I suffer and I am even chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not in chains'. 2 Timothy 2:1-10

28. Empower coordinators to appoint elders

I left you in Crete, so that you could put in order the things that still needed doing and appoint church elders in every town. Remember my instructions: an elder must be without fault; he must have only one wife, and his children must be believers and not have the reputation of being wild or disobedient. For since a church leader is in charge of God's work, he should be without fault. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered, or a drunkard or violent or greedy for money. He must be hospitable and love what is good. He must be self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the message which can be trusted and which agrees

with the doctrine. In this way he will be able to encourage others with the true teaching and also to show the error of those who are opposed to it. Titus 1:5-9

29. Show shepherds humility

I, who am an elder myself, appeal to the church elders among you. I am a witness of Christ's sufferings, and I will share in the glory that will be revealed. I appeal to you to be shepherds of the flock that God gave you and to take care of it willingly, as God wants you to, and not unwillingly. Do your work, not for mere pay, but from a real desire to serve. Do not try to rule over those who have been put in your care, but be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the glorious crown which will never lose its brightness. In the same way you younger people must submit yourselves to your elders. And all of you must put on the apron of humility, to serve one another; for the scripture says, "God resists the proud, but shows favor to the humble." Humble yourselves, then, under God's mighty hand, so that he will lift you up in his own good time. 1 Peter 5:1-6

30. Prepare believers to suffer

Leave all your worries with him, because he cares for you. Be alert, be on watch! Your enemy, the Devil, roams around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Be firm in your faith and resist him, because you know that other believers in all the world are going through the same kind of sufferings. But after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who calls you to share his eternal glory in union with Christ, will himself perfect you and give you firmness, strength, and a sure foundation. To Him be the power forever! Amen.

1 Peter 5:7-1

Appendices

Checklist of New Testament “one-another” commands

To minister to each other

- Teach and admonish one another:
Colossians 3:16.

- Instruct one another: Romans 15:14.

- Exhort one another: Hebrews 3:13.

- Do good one to another:
1 Thessalonians 5:15.

- Care for one another: 1 Corinthians 12:25.

- Bear one another's burdens:
Galatians 6:2.

- Speak the truth, as members of one another: Ephesians 4:25.
- Serve one another with whatever gift each has received: 1 Peter 4:10.
- Lay down our lives for one another: 1 John 3:16.

To encourage good fellowship

- Have fellowship with one another: 1 John 1:7.
- Love one another: John 13:34-35; 5:12, 17; Romans 12:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 1 John 3:11, 14, 23; 4:7, 11, 12; 2 John 1:5.
- Love one another to fulfill the law: Romans 13:8.
- Increase in love for one another: 2 Thessalonians 1:3.
- Abound in love for one another: 1 Thessalonians 3:12.

- Be kind to, bear with, and forgive one another: Ephesians 3:13; 4:32; Colossians 3:13.
- Have genuine mutual love from the heart for one another: 1 Peter 1:22.
- Maintain constant love for one another: 1 Peter 4:8.

To build spiritual unity

- Show honor to one another: Romans 12:10.
- Agree with one another: 2 Corinthians 13:11.
- Live in harmony with one another: Romans 12:16 (see Romans 15:5).
- Wash one another's feet: John 13:14.
- Greet one another with a holy kiss (this corresponds to an embrace in some cultures): Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Peter 5:14.

- Be at peace with one another:
Mark 9:50.
- No longer criticize one another:
Romans 14:13.
- Do not speak badly against one another:
James 4:11.
- Do not grumble against one another:
James 5:9.
- Bear with (have patience with) one
another: Ephesians 4:2.
- Be subject to one another:
Ephesians 5:21.
- Through love, become slaves to one
another: Galatians 5:13.
- Have unity, sympathy, and love for one
another: 1 Peter 1:22.
- Clothe yourselves with humility in your
dealings with one another: 1 Peter 5:5.

To build up the body

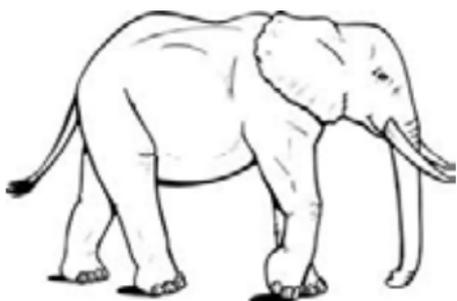
- Encourage and build up one another:
1 Thessalonians 4:18 and 5:1, 11.
- Provoke one another to love and good deeds: Hebrews 10:24.
- Meet together, encourage one another:
Hebrews 10:25.
- Rejoice together: 1 Corinthians 12:26.
- Come together, each with a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation: 1 Corinthians 14:26.
- Welcome one another: Romans 15:7.
- Be hospitable to one another: 1 Peter 4:9.
- Confess our sins one to another and pray for one another: James 5:16.
- Suffer together: 1 Corinthians 12:26.
- Work together: 1 Corinthians 3:9;
2 Corinthians 6:1.

Elephantine churches and rabbitine churches

Advantages of little churches

1. Small groups allow many to participate actively.
2. In most societies, people come to Christ more easily in small groups.
3. They can avoid arousing authorities who are hostile to Christians and abuse “unregistered” churches that meet openly.
4. It is easier to win entire families by meeting in their homes.
5. Children can take a more active part in worship and thus know that they are an important part of the church body.
6. Churches that do not spend funds on buildings can send church planters to reproduce as new congregations.

7. Little churches reproduce easily, because they have not become institutions; they have not acquired expensive equipment and traditions that are hard to pass on to daughter churches.
8. “Rabbitine” congregations multiply much more quickly. Small congregations win proportionately more people to Christ than do the same number of believers in an “elephantine” church.



Matures in 18 years.
1 baby per pregnancy.
Is fertile 4 times a year.
Gestation time is
22-months.
Family can grow from 2 to 3
in three years.



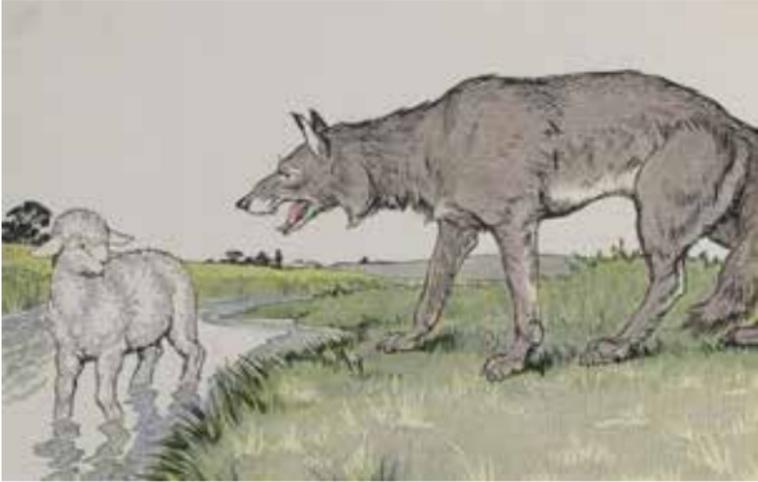
Matures in 4
months.
Averages 7 babies.
Is almost always
fertile.
Gestation time is
1-month.
Family can multiply
to many millions in
3 years.

Application. Do not simply split a group into two parts. Train new leaders while the group is still small. As it grows, have one or more novice leaders start new groups, taking with them as many as want to go with them. Remember:

- A church can be both a rabbit and an elephant when it lets cell groups multiply and become tiny churches within a big one.
- A church – whatever its size – is not ‘planted’ until it is doing the ministries that God requires of a church.
- A rabbit church leader is a TRUE teacher only if he or she helps others to do ministries. Simply teaching is not leading.

Watch out for wolves!

Paul warned that wolves would come from within and without (Acts 20:28-31).



- A wolf from *within* is a misguided believer.
- Wolves from *without* are non-believers who teach doctrines of an unorthodox sect or of a false religion.
- You must deal with wolves swiftly and firmly.

How to Spot “Wolves”

1. **Sharp teeth.** They appear loving and very friendly, at first. Acts 20:29
2. **Pointed ears.** They prove to be excellent listeners. They especially listen for criticism about a flock’s legitimate leaders.
3. **Padded paws.** They sneak up deftly, entering by a window instead of by the door, that is, without an invitation from the legitimate leader. John 10:10f
4. **Big mouth.** They come showing a flashy, ‘painted’ smile.
5. **Shifty eyes.** They befriend weak lambs and untended sheep. Matthew 10:16
6. **Slobber.** Insatiably hungry, they move on when they run out of lambs to consume.

How to deal with wolves

1. Do not allow unknown 'guests' to preach or to make announcements.
2. When you see that individuals have been turning away believers or seekers, go to them as 'wolves' and warn them, telling them to get out of the churches and not to come back.
3. If 'wolves' will not heed your warning, then expose them to their own leaders.
4. Expose them and their tactics to other churches, as needed.
5. Finally, be aware of your own motives and heart. Be on guard lest you become a wolf.

Share your authority with your disciples

Jesus is the only Lord of your churches



1 Peter 5:1-3

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

Share your authority with your disciples

1. Offer to coach new believers who host temporary gathering groups.
2. Allow seekers and new believers to participate in leadership from the start.
3. Encourage new believers to establish new ministries to meet local needs.
4. Permit mistakes. Coach workers on how to do better.
5. Orient all instruction towards obedience to Jesus as Lord.
6. Hold up to new workers the hope of becoming elders.
7. Pray for grace to work yourself out of a ministry, by passing it on to others.
8. Keep all church work voluntary and not a legalistic requirement.

Coach workers in a way that they can imitate you with others

1. Meet often at a place and time convenient to them.
2. Pray together for wisdom from the Holy Spirit to meet the needs of their groups.
3. Listen to them report on their groups' needs and opportunities.
4. Plan with them what their groups will do together immediately.
5. Provide them Bible readings and simple training materials.
6. Review previous readings and materials they read at home.
7. Practice with them any new skills they require.
8. Intercede with them for God to bless their groups and to win others through them.

Checklist of spiritual armor

Show your disciples how to don the full armor of God, at any moment of every day. Peter said, “In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord” (1 Pet. 3:15).

- Truth as our *belt*. Jesus is your way, your truth and your life (John 14:6).
- Bulletproof *breastplate* of righteousness. Jesus is your breastplate of righteousness: “If Christ is in you, though your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness” (Rom. 8:10).
- Wearing your peace like *boots* that take you anywhere, carrying the gospel of peace to others. Jesus himself is “our peace” (Eph. 2:14).
- The *shield* of faith that wards off Satan’s fiery arrows. “I am your shield, your very great reward” (Gen. 15:1).
- The *helmet* of salvation protects you for eternity. Jesus is your salvation: “He is able to save completely those who come

to God through Him, because he always lives to intercede for them” (Heb. 7:25).

- The *sword* of the Spirit. You wield the Word of God, carried in your heart (Luke 8:15).
- Maintain constant communication with your Commander-in-Chief, praying alertly and interceding. “In return for my friendship, they accuse me. But I am a man of prayer” (Psa. 109:4).

Discuss together

What authority to lead do our church planters have?

What should we authorize church planters and new leaders to practice in new believers' homes? In cell groups? In new churches?

Which parts of our training can trainees quickly learn and practice with others, in turn?

Which parts of our training should we make easier to learn and to imitate with others?

Mister Tradition



His objections

1. “You must let congregations become mature and strong before they start new ones.”
2. “New congregations must comply with our denominational distinctives and regulations, lest things get out of control—my control.”
3. “New flocks must build a chapel, pay tithes and follow a proper liturgy.”
4. “Only properly-educated clergymen may administer the sacraments. Otherwise baptisms will not be valid and communion will be taken unworthily.”

5. “It is important that all things be done *decently and in order*, lest the untrained cause problems in the church”
6. “All congregational leaders must meet the high qualifications set by the denominational head office. This only allows for ordained, full-time, salaried leaders.”
7. “All believers must gather to listen to well-crafted sermons presented by well-trained preachers.”
8. “The denomination establishes Bible schools and seminaries where the best teachers can systematically educate future leaders.”
9. “Every new congregation must be properly approved by the denominational headquarters, and it must abide by its directives – my directives.”

Traditions are not wrong when aligned with scripture. Now let us look at corresponding biblical replies.

Your replies

1. “Youth breeds enthusiasm. New churches breed more new churches.” (Epaphras)
2. “Young flocks must remain free to humbly obey Christ first and their pastors second.” (Christ and Jews).
3. “Young flocks must remain free to enter the homes of unconverted seekers. Meeting in chapels would restrict access by unbelievers.” (Peter & Cornelius)
4. “The early church baptized new believers without delay.” (The apostles)
5. “Yes, God is a God of order, but He is also grants freedom for Spirit-led spontaneity. (1 Cor. 14:24-26). “It is for freedom that Christ set us free.” (Paul)
6. “Biblical qualities? Yes! Man-made requirements remain secondary.” (Timothy)
7. “Preach? Yes! But aim to become doers of the Word in Christ-like humility.” (Timothy)

8. “New baby churches require less formality. Young flocks must remain open to pastoral trainers who respond to their immediate needs and to their leaders.” (Titus)
9. “Approved? Yes! But not meticulously *controlled*, not *micro-managed*.” (Titus)

Four Church-Planting Models



1. Antioch model (Acts 13-14)

- A congregation sends a small team to distant fields. Acts 13:1f
- The traveling team moves from one region to another, starting the first few flocks in each region. Acts 16:1f
- The team stays in a region long enough to establish leaders, or they return there briefly to do so.
- The team does not stay to lead the congregation; they maintained communication as they moved on to

other neglected areas or they returned to their sending church. Acts 14:21f

2. Joppa model (Acts 10)

- A mother church sends helpers on a short-term trip with an experienced leader, to start a church nearby.
- Like the Antioch team, workers do not stay to lead the church; they return to their own church.

3. Business model (Acts 18)



- Believers operate a small business while starting churches in neglected regions. Workers earn their living by “making tents.”
- Scripture reveals how they did so in Rome, Corinth and Ephesus.

- They left their original church permanently, moving from city to city, gathering house-based flocks.

4. Western urban model

- A fairly large group permanently leaves a mother congregation to form a daughter congregation nearby, in their same culture, usually with salaried, highly-skilled leaders.
- A congregation with a large number of members may send a group that is big enough to hire a paid shepherd from the start, maintaining a worship style like that of their big mother congregation.

Maintain simplicity in worship

“Some unwise worship leaders strut about like peacocks, confusing worship with performance and entertainment! True worshipers enter the presence of the Most Holy!”



Worship basics

- Worship requires good advance planning.
- Worship includes teaching well with occasional participatory role play and with menu-based theme choices.
- Wise worship leaders do not try to entertain their audience.
- Small house churches may need definite beginning and ending times. Doing so

compensates for the informality of private homes.

Worship Elements

- Praise God through songs, reading, chanting, spontaneous utterance, dance, a variety of appropriate bodily postures.
- Pray to God expressed in a variety of external forms.
- Preach and teach from the Bible, yet be creative! Use reading, drama, song and mutual sharing.
- Give money, time, food, and anything helpful to others.
- Confess sins and receive assurance of forgiveness.
- Celebrate the Lord's Supper.
- Take time to show loving fellowship between believers.

Discuss together

In what ways were the first disciples worshiping and obeying Jesus, according to Acts 2:37-47?

What kinds of worship activities do new believers like to practice in our new churches?

What kinds of worships activities do new believers find hard to practice in our new churches?

Which New Testament worship activities must we strengthen in our new churches?

Mentor new leaders



Follow mentoring guidelines

1. Train new leaders privately, “behind the scenes,” as did Aquila and Priscilla with Apollos (Acts 18:24-28).
2. As in a relay race, pass on to others the apostolic ‘baton’ of authority, message and responsibility, as Paul did. Keep the baton simple, but biblical. Keep the Lord’s work easy to pick up and pass on to others. Show your trainees how to become “doers of the Word, not hearers only.”
3. Do not focus on your trainees alone, but also on the flock that they shepherd.

4. Serve as a model in character and conduct whom trainees can imitate.
5. Evaluate your teaching by the results seen in your trainees' life and work.
6. Obtain or prepare affordable, practical training lessons that you can sell to your trainees, that will help them implement their plans. The sale of material, possibly at a reduced or symbolic cost, gives it value in the eyes of the trainee.
7. Keep on mentoring until trainees no longer need to meet with you regularly. One to two years is usually enough. Afterwards, remain available to share wise counsel.

Avoid mentoring errors

1. Failing to pass the light-weight baton soon enough; controlling too much and too long.
2. Employing materials or equipment that are too expensive or too sophisticated for the local audience.
3. Being so generous with outside funds that believers depend on you more than on God.
4. Teaching and worshiping in a style that requires education that national leaders lack.
5. Spending more than half your time together discussing unsolvable problems.

Make disciples

True or False?

- Make disciples by teaching only Bible doctrine and sound theology.
True? () or False? ()
- Make disciples by training them and teaching them to obey Jesus' commandments above all.
True? () or False? ()

Disciple-making entails more than ...

- Meeting someone, one-on-one. While doing so is not prohibited, it is better to do as Jesus did; he normally met with twelve, sometimes with three and occasionally with one.
- Helping new believers in their spiritual life, or teaching biblical doctrines. Jesus and

Recommended mentoring materials

- Train and Multiply®

62 lessons for church planters and pastoral leaders, widely employed in many languages, www.trainandmultiply.com.

- Paul-Timothy

100 lessons for shepherds and children's workers, www.paul-timothy.net.

- Shepherd's Storybook, a story that incorporates bible stories, www.paul-timothy.net

- www.peopleofyes.com

- www.scm-action.org/--resources.html

his Apostles made disciples of seekers, of new believers, of growing saints, and of strong leaders, by teaching them truth and by modeling faith, life and skills.

Disciple-making always entails ...

- Highly-relational methods: you invest your time in a few others.
- Loving obedience to the Lord Jesus before all else.

Employ role-play



1. Keep role plays brief, short and to-the-point.
2. Only act out main points of a Bible story; do not include needless details.
3. Do not memorize lines; let each actor speak in his own words.
4. Be sure that every trainee has ample opportunity to participate in some way during various role plays.
5. Employ role-play often. We learn best by hearing, seeing, acting and applying.

6. Keep role-play *simple and biblical*; no props are required.
7. Lay persons of all ages can participate, children as well as adults.
8. Have fun! The participants will remember what they see and experience, more than what they simply hear.

Tell stories and act out skits

Story-telling guidelines

1. Teach the Bible in story format. Stories remains universally effective, and we remember them for a long time, recalling visual images and audio messages.
2. Recount historical events and biblical stories by reading, reciting, singing or role-play.
3. Employ local art forms, symbols, drama and musical styles.
4. Train new church planters in a variety of settings, not only in a lecture hall.
5. Mentor others not simply through explanation but through demonstration.

Simple Bible-story skits

- Adam and Eve in Eden (Gen 3); Cain and Abel (Gen 4).
- The flood (Gen 6–9).
- The faithful Israelites who slew those who persisted in idolatry (Exodus 32).
- The contest between Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18).
- The Lord punishing those who worshiped a golden calf (Exodus 32-33).
- The ten plagues in Egypt and the parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 1-15).
- The Passover lamb in Exodus (Exodus 11-13).
- The Holy One striking Nadab and Abihu dead when they entered His presence improperly (Leviticus 10).

- Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross (Matt 26-27; Luke 2).
- Jesus claiming to be the Son of God and later being raised from death by the Eternal One (Mark 14-16).
- The Father recognizing Jesus as His Son at His baptism (Matt 3).
- Jesus suffering during his trials and crucifixion (Mark 15-15; Luke 22-24; John 18-20).
- John the Baptist proclaiming forgiveness to those who confessed their sins (Matt 3).
- Jesus forgiving very bad people, while warning the Pharisees who trusted in their good works that they had not entered the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt 9 and 21:28-45).
- Jesus forgiving a paralytic who had done nothing on his own initiative to come to Jesus (Matt 2).

- Paul promising salvation to an entire family of a believing jailer, even before they heard the gospel (Acts 16:31).
- Angels announcing Jesus' birth to shepherds (Luke 2).

Appoint regional, church-planting coordinators



Biblical example

Query. “What was Titus’ role on Crete? How did he monitor many ‘baby’ churches that needed pastoral care?” **Answer.** Paul had instructed Titus to put in order what remained to be done, and to appoint elders in every town.

Guidelines for coordinators

1. Titus was to train shepherding elders. Paul's Epistle to Titus trained him on how to do so.
2. Titus had to find out which ministries were still lacking in the churches, in order to deal with them. Doing so requires you to listen to their leaders whom you are training, as they report to you on what their churches are doing and not yet doing. Accountability is also crucial.
3. While mentoring new leaders, keep in mind a list of ministries required by the New Testament, helping them to choose what their churches need most urgently.

Duties of coordinators

1. Hold workshops to introduce pastoral training in neglected regions.
2. Seek and train new trainers among new leaders.

3. Model the skills needed by those who mentor other leaders.
4. Provide materials that are geared to the learning level of new leaders, and that aim to multiply churches.
5. Keep churches multiplying, by training trainers to mentor new leaders.
6. Keep records of those who are mentoring, on whom, where, and with what results.
7. Maintain a big map of each region that shows names of mentors.
8. Compile information on neglected peoples, on training opportunities, and on new congregations. Use such information to pray, to plan and to inform churches so they can pray and plan.
9. Extend the work to neglected peoples and regions, empowering co-workers to help plan outreaches.

10. Whenever mentoring stops for any reason, reorganize training networks and generational training chains.

Qualifications of coordinators

1. Eager and capable to do pastoral training and mentoring, yet with a pure and humble heart. Luke 8:15
2. Not too involved in other ministries that might distract them. Luke 21:34
3. Able to keep on doing it for many years, in that coordination should be a calling, not a temporary, elected position.
4. Growing in step with elder requirements.

Disciplines of coordinators

1. Maintaining frequent communication.
2. Remaining goal directed; keeping promises.

3. Acting in a timely manner; keeping appointments.
4. Removing unnecessary restrictions on church planters.

Priorities of coordinators

- Investigate who and where are neglected people groups are in a region.
- Make plans for trainees to enter neglected those areas.
- Mentor all new church leaders, for as long as they need it.
- Guide trainees to identify and start mentoring other new leaders.
- Train up others as coordinators who are competent and qualified.
- Promote within new churches all the ministries that the New Testament requires.

- Provide training materials suitable to learners' educational and economical level.
- Arrange and lead workshops, but do not depend only on big-group seminars.
- Evaluate results with honesty, and make new plans as needed.

Endorsements

“Anything coming out of Galen Currah and Patrick O’Connor’s stable has to be just what is needed. ‘Start Churches Now!’ is just the thing that every church planter needs to have in hand as an answer book for all the FAQs that anyone could ask or think of. I am sure this would go a long way in CPMs all over the world.” Victor Choudhrie, MD, author of *The Church in Your House*, India.

“This... is destined to fuel the Kingdom Revolution unfolding in our day: a rediscovery of the New Testament multiplication that “turned the world upside down.” Robby Butler, The Mission Network, USA.

“‘Start Churches Now!’ offers practical advice for church planters who are not attracted to large, bulky systems. Years of wisdom are packed into clear statements, and helpful tools give the church planter ways to plan and train. I highly recommend

this book!” Robert Rasmussen, Director, U.S.A. Ministries of One Challenge International.

“If I’d read it 50 years ago, I’d have avoided a ton of mistakes!” George Patterson, author of *Train & Multiply* and *Church Multiplication Guide*.

“This book is spiritual gold. This is a great tool to help you start a new generation of multiplying house churches no matter where you live.” Dr. Rad Zdero, author of *The Global House Church Movement* and *Letters to the House Church Movement*.

“Don’t bring people to the church -- bring the church to the people! Only if the church becomes viral like sourdough will it ever work itself through the whole dough. Let Patrick and Galen teach you the practical how-to steps to see that happen in your area!” Wolfgang Simson, Germany. Author of *Houses That Change the World* and “The Starfish Manifesto.”

“Our team in Mongolia applied the Biblical principles laid out in such simple and powerful form in the book you are holding. We saw God move in power and the birth of a movement of

*multiplying churches and Mongolian missions that continues today. Brian Hogan, Church Planting Coach and author of *There's a Sheep in my Bathtub: Birth of a Mongolian Church Planting Movement.**

“‘Start Churches Now!’ is a very practical, simple, effective tool for church reproduction.” Ed Aw, NE India

*“I found myself saying ‘Yes!’ on page after page as I read it.” Felicity Dale. Author of *An Army of Ordinary People*, and co-author of *The Rabbit and the Elephant!**

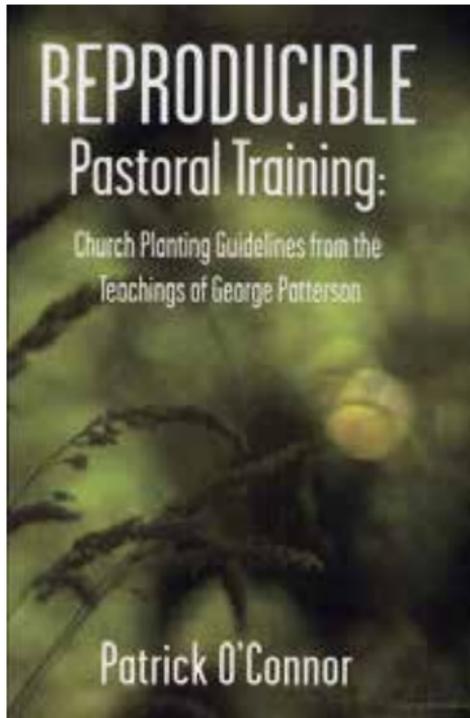
For those who have been spurred on for love and good deeds with *Start Churches Now!*, also available through William Carey Library is Dr. O'Connor's *Reproducible Pastoral Training*.

The serious student of church planting movements will gasp as he or she grasps in simple terms 68 prized principles for training others for sustainable church multiplication packed into 360 experience-filled pages.

These simple, imitable and thoroughly biblical concepts are gleaned from the authors 16-year ministry in Honduras, where the Lord started a new movement of churches in a pioneer region (western Honduras rural mountains).

The author was coached on year by year by George Patterson and with whom he remains a friend and colleague to this day.

How can we 'start churches now'? By looking to the Lord and His book of Acts and by gleaning from the experience of others, as set forth in *Reproducible Pastoral Training* (William Carey Library, 2006).



Patrick O'Connor has served as a missionary since 1989 with Missions Door, and in this role also serves as Action International Ministries' International Coordinator for Sustainable Church Multiplication (SCM).

O'Connor also serves as Regional Trainer with E3 Partners, traveling tirelessly to train others.

About the authors

\$6.95
Missions



O'Connor and Currah
in South Asia

Galen Currah, D.Miss., maintains www.paul-timothy.net and www.startachurchnow.com. He has served as a trainer and mentor of field workers in several countries, one of the "brains behind the operation" for several CPMs. Although retired, Galen continues to travel and train internationally. He and Jennifer make their home in Portland, Oregon (USA). To interact with Galen, write to him at galencurrah@paul-timothy.net

Patrick O'Connor, D.Miss., pioneered a new and vibrant movement of churches in the rural mountains of western Honduras. Patrick, who was raised in Bihar, India, currently trains for new "churches planting churches" in Africa, Latin America and South Asia. He and Debbie have trained in more than 20 countries for many years. They make their home near Seattle, Washington (USA). To interact with Patrick, write Patrick at poc2020min@gmail.com. He also maintains www.scm-action.org