



NEW CHURCHES

MULTIPLY THE MISSION.

THE NEW TESTAMENT PLANTER

**Excerpt from Chapter 3 of Planting Missional Churches (2nd ed)*

Through the ministry of the apostle Paul, the New Testament provides a great example of the way we can minister to unchurched persons. Paul invited the recipients of his letters to “imitate me, as I also imitate Christ” (1 Cor 11:1). What did Paul do that was worthy of imitation? What did he want his readers, including us, to imitate? Identifying the values and actions of Paul can enrich the ministry of every modern-day church planter. Take a look at this outline created by John Worcester. Paul the Planter:

1. Paul was personally prepared for his church planting ministry.
 - His world-class formal training gave him a broad understanding of divine history (Acts 22:3).
 - He was vitally connected with God (2 Cor 12:9).
 - He became prepared by stepping out in ministry from the start (Acts 9:20-22).
 - He was teachable. He apprenticed under Barnabas.
 - He was willing to be under authority before God put him over others (Acts 11:25-26).
 - He lived an exemplary life (1 Thess 2:1-12).
2. Paul was an evangelist.
 - He began preaching the gospel right after conversion (Acts 9:19-22).
 - He was a net fisherman in two ways: he led whole families to Christ (Acts 16:25-33), and he conducted large-group evangelistic meetings (Acts 13:44; 14:1; 19:9-10).

- He looked for those who were most receptive (Acts 18:6).
3. Paul was an entrepreneurial leader.
 - He had a vision and call from God (Acts 9:15; 26:16-18).
 - His vision was to lead missionary teams into new territories to plant churches (Rom 15:20-23).
 - He selected the workers and apprentices he wanted on his team.
 - He was not afraid to ask others to make sacrifices for the cause of Christ (Acts 16:2-3). Sometimes he would not let people on his team (Acts 15:38). Paul also appointed long-term leaders for the churches he started (Acts 14:23). He even gave direction to his teammates as to where they should minister (Acts 18:19; 19:22).
 - He received direction from God as to where his team should plant, and his teammates had confidence in his decisions (Acts 16:6-10).
 - He was a proactive strategist (Acts 13:14, 44-49). He established a reproducible pattern for his church planting (Acts 14:1; 17:2).
 - He deliberately did advanced planning (Acts 19:21).
 4. Paul was a team player.
 - He was willing to be on a team (Acts 13:1-5).
 - He always planted with a team (Acts 15:40; 16:6; 20:4).
 - He had a sending base church to which he reported (Acts 14:26-28).
 5. Paul was a flexible, risk-taking pioneer (1 Cor 9:19-21).
 - He constantly penetrated new territory (Rom 15:20).
 - He targeted a new group (Rom 11:1-14).
 - He pioneered new methods of ministry (Acts 13).
 6. Paul cared for people (shepherd role).
 - He invested personally in the lives of people (Acts 20:17-21; 31).
 - He was like a nursing mother and an encouraging father (1 Thess 2:7-11).
 - He was vitally concerned with the growth and development of converts (Acts 14:22).
 - He drew close to coworkers (2 Tim 1:2).
 7. Paul empowered others (equipper role).
 - In order to lead this rapidly growing movement of Christianity, he risked delegation to young Christians (Acts 16:1-3).
 - His team planted churches on their first missionary journey and then a few months later came back to these new churches and appointed elders (Acts 13:13; 14:21-23).
 - He recognized his own strengths and weaknesses and delegated to others according to their strengths (Titus 1:5).

8. Paul stayed committed to fulfilling God's calling and vision even at the cost of extreme personal sacrifice (Acts 14:19-20; 2 Cor 11:23-28).
 - He never backed down, and he never gave up.
 - He maintained a thankful attitude in the face of cruel and unfair treatment (Acts 16:25).

9. Paul was willing to let go of his church plants and move on to plant more (Acts 16:40).
 - Paul needed special encouragement to stay in a city for long (Acts 18:9-11).
 - The longest he ever stayed in any one place was three years (Acts 20:31).
 - Ephesus was possibly his strongest plant and our best model (Acts 19:10).
 - He had faith in God's ability to keep the churches he started strong (Acts 20:32).
 - He was willing to let his best teammates leave his team in order to benefit best the kingdom of God (Acts 17:14).
 - He followed the example of Barnabas, who was willing to let go of the top position on the church planting team (Acts 13:6-12).
 - He modeled the church at Antioch that was willing to let go of its top leaders (Acts 13:1-4).