**1 Corinthians 9:12-27**

Surrendering our rights (passive approach): (9:12)

A. For the Gospel.

**9:12**

**If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.** Paul says, "if you knew what I put up with so that my message would be well-received and well-understood, it would shock you.

This kind of endurance and patience wasn't exercised out of a desire to be hip or relevant or liked or loved in of itself. This was not a desire to "show the love of Jesus" or to "meet needs". This was for the sake of a message that must be voiced and must be preached.

**9:13-14**

**Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? 14. Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.** This is not a message on giving, but it is subpoint of Paul's that he is making by the way that people who preach God's truth, particularly evangelistic truth should be supported physically and fiscally just as the priest was in the temple, and the farmer is in his garden (9:3-7), and the ox is under his plow and in his own furrow (9:8). But…notice what he says:…

**9:15-16**

**But I have used none of those things, nor have I written these things that it should be done so to me; for it would be better for me to die than that anyone should make my boasting void. 16. For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of; for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!** This is not an "unholy boast" that Paul speaks about elsewhere in Ephesians 2:8-9. This is a very holy boasting where one as an "exulting" or an internal, bursting exuberance over something that is wonderful and heaven-sent. Paul further explains this elsewhere (Galatians 6:14). It is as if He says "I get to preach the Gospel to everyone all the time without asking them a thing!"

Having said all that we have said about his right to be supported, Paul was ecstatic that though he was entitled to this privilege, he didn't require their goods or anybody else's for that matter; to freely give a Gospel of freedom to every man, bond or free brought him liberating ecstasy…and he wasn't willing to forfeit that joy to simply capitalize on his rights. Let's see this again in verses 17-18.

**9:17-18**

**For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship 18. What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.**

Again, it is not always appropriate to lay one's rights of protection or privilege or provision down, but sometimes—for the Gospel's sake—it is not only appropriate, it is absurd to not do so.

In these verses of 1 Corinthians 9—really, all of them—we find Paul saying that "for those 18 months that I preached the Gospel to you and showed you all of its ramifications, God's justice, God's love, God's scheme of salvation, God's Son & His surrender to His Father, God's forgiveness, God's expectations of gratitude, God's power displayed in life's darkness—while this was taking place, I required nothing of you. In fact, I surrendered everything that belonged to me for you, Jews and Gentiles alike."

Seeking others' privilege (active approach):

A. The expectation of saving the soul (1 Corinthians 9:22).

"Well, brother, it's the Lord that does the saving…" (3:9).

**9:19-22**

**For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; 20. and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the**

**law, that I might win those who are under the law; 21. To those who are without the law, as without the law (not being without the law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; 22. To the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men that I might by all means save some.**

a. "By all means…" How casual does this sound? How much of an afterthought does this resemble? How much of the dregs of Paul's schedule do we think this took?
    i. Some say that "giving of our money to the Lord is marked by setting a giving goal and adjusting the lifestyle around it."
        1. Well, it is the same way with time.
            a. Particularly, Gospel-sowing, world-evangelizing usage of our time. We set our priorities correctly towards the heart of God in the souls of men, and we adjust our lifestyles around it.

B. The expectation of striving for award (1 Corinthians 9:24; Matthew 6:20).

**9:23-27**
**Now this I do for the Gospels sake, that I may be partaker of it with you. 24. Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.**

a. Don't forget…it's for the Gospel (just like the surrender of rights to begin with; just like the seeking of service to begin with).
    i. Which of course, is a result of being driven by the Gospel
        1. Which is a result of being saved by the Gospel (read John Newton passage)
b. This sacrifice for the Gospel in the life of the seeker or the application of the Gospel in the life of the new believer is absolutely discredited with a lack of discipline.
    i. This can be seen with a waning focus or with a fleshly or loose lifestyle.
        1. We are not driven by the Gospel to be loose with our tongues or flippant with our appearance or careless in our holiness.
            a. A gracious God drives us to be gracious, yes.
            b. A merciful God drives us to be merciful, yes.
            c. A loving God drives us to be compassionate, yes.
                i. ….but a "holy God drives us to be fearlessly holy."

## A CROSS CULTURE CHURCH PLANTING STRATEGY[1]

### Introduction: The Essential Picture of Church Planting

Before one can have a real appreciation for a method of cross-cultural church planting, they must first come to an understanding of what "church planting" really means. Church-planting is the action of stabilizing a new church. Furthermore, a "church" is an assembly. The word behind "church" is *ekklesia* and is found 118 times in the Greek New Testament, and it is translated "church" 115 of those times in the King James Version

[1]Originally submitted to Dr C Thomas Wright by W.J. Sturm in 2012 to LBTS for course ICST 650.

of the Bible (KJV).[2] A survey of the other three times in Acts 19 will show the reader that this was a word used for a gathering of people for the conducting of certain business.

"…The essential theme of the whole Bible from beginning to end is that God's historical purpose is to call out a people for himself; that this people is a 'holy' people, set apart from the world…"[3] So the "churches," found in various locations, are miniature illustrations of both the "calling out" that takes place to the people of God at salvation and the "calling out" that takes place at the second coming when those "in Christ" both "rise" and are "caught up" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17).

## The Need for the Harvest's Lord

The believer who is hopeful of any success on another field should consider that missions is God's work and prayer is, no doubt, the "prepping of the beaches"[4] before the assault of the footsoldier. Marshall speaks of this necessity when he cites a young Williams College student in 1806 by the name of Samuel Mills:

> …He and four of his friends were walking through the countryside when a sudden thunderstorm drove them to seek shelter in a large haystack. Held Captive by the rain, they fell to talking about the 'moral darkness of Asia,' when one of them suggested that they pray for that continent. One prayer led to another, and the more they prayed and talked, the more they became seized with the desire to go to Asia as missionaries…Two years later…[5]

Here's an example of what one finds in Matthew 9:38 when the disciples are instructed to pray for laborers to be "sent." The next two verses show the reader that these "sent ones" (apostles) were the answer to their own prayer. Two years after these prayer meetings began, a missionary society was formed, and within the next two years, five missionaries were sent to the continent.

## Walking the Land

Marshall recorded Mills' later exploits in New England where he and a colleague search the states on a two-year "fact-finding tour." They were dispatched by two states' missionary societies—travelling down the Mississippi with General Andrew Jackson and his troops. They determined the population to minister ratios in each region (or county).[6] Certainly there is time and place for surveying the mission field for the Gospel. While many believers will acknowledge the strategic structure of the spirit world[7] and the placement of these echelons over particular regions of the world,[8] they are reticent to accept the reality that believers should likewise be strategic. There is no guarantee that strategizers can determine the next place of God's direction in the missionaries' life, but they may have a place to start, nonetheless.

## The Necessity of a Clear Message

Church Planting is pointless without the clear message of the Gospel. The church is not a merely a clearinghouse for social programs; nor is it a place where disoriented congregants can find a sort of sense of belonging through inspirational speeches. J. Mack Stiles captures this well:

> The healthy evangelist is asking…questions and looking for answers so as to guard the gospel. Here is the critical test. Could you have preached that sermon if Christ had not died on the cross? Could you have developed that Christian leadership principle [or whatever principle you are sharing] had Christ not been crucified?[9]

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[2]Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for *ekklēsia (Strong's 1577)*". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2011. 24 Jun 2011. < http:// www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G1577&t=KJV >

[3]John R.W. Stott. *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount* (Downers Grove, Ill: Inter-Varsity, 1978), 17.

[4]This is a term which speaks to the usage of battle ships and bombers which condition the enemies land before the amphibious assault comes ashore.

[5] Peter Marshall & David Manuel. *From Sea to Shining Sea* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1986), 120.

[6] Ibid., 122.

[7]Ephesians 6:12 speaks of four different types of non-"flesh-and-blood" foes.

[8]Ezekiel 28:12 and Daniel 10:13 speak of the "King of Tyre" and "Prince of Persia" and they are clearly not human beings of whom the prophets speak.

[9] J. Mack Stiles. *Marks of the Messenger* (Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Books, 2010), 41.

This is not to say that "cold cups of water" (Matthew 10:41) are not intended for the lost world, but that these acts of kindness have the Gospel as their intended end. James 1:27 speaks of caring for the widow and orphan, but they speak of that in the context of "having the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ" (James 2:1) and professing this faith with adorning works (James 2:18).

Stiles relays the story of a certain missionary to Guatemala who introduced new dietary ideas and farming ingenuity to the populace. After earning an amount of expertise authority, he was able to share the Gospel and men started to get saved. They stopped getting drunk, beating their wives, and misusing their children. Even the mayor of that town noticed that there was real change.[10] Why is this? The Gospel changes hearts through regeneration and appeals to the mind through the example of the Christ who died for others' betterment—after living years of spirit-filled, selfless service.

*A Clear Message: Not Cultural Reformation*

Do sinners act sinful? This is not an issue of making other cultures act more American, more Baptist, more Western, etc…; "church planting" is not about making sinners act saintly.

> Jesus did not command us to change the world. As a matter of fact, it is evident from many passages that expect the exact opposite. We are not to expect lost, pagan, secular culture to act and think like Bible-believers…Churches are appointed agencies for the salvation of men.[11]

If an entire culture is made more like the culture of the missionary, the only thing that is guaranteed is that a sort of civilizing has been done (in the eyes of the missionary). Only those who have bloated, nationalistic ideals of "right" and "ethical" can assume their way is righteous and good before God.

*A Clear Message: The Life Commitment*

In the spirit of 1 Thessalonians 2:8, a commitment to the conveyance of truth should entail a commitment to invest one's life in some form. It would have been preposterous to tell the apostle that since they have now planted the church and have left it to the others to lead, then they are no longer under expectation before God to lead or account for the development of those who make up that assembly. Acts 16:5 records Paul and Silas as they survey the spiritual health of those churches already planted on preceding trips.[12] The disbanding of authority (Psalm 2:3), all in the name of the "spirit of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2), appears to be much more than a desire for autonomy. This desire for independence has become an idol and has severely crippled much church planting today. All that is being sought is an organized methodology—supervised by those who could be considered fathers of particular church's faith. In angst over Roman Catholicism, many have forgotten the paternal language of the apostle over his churches (1 Corinthians 4:15; 2 Corinthians 11:1-2).

## Church-Planting Methodology[13]

*Methodology: Commissioning*

This is the sending out from the church to plant a church. This commission was given by Jesus Christ, the head of the church (Matthew 28:19-20; Ephesians 1:22-23). Going forward to Acts 13, the reader will notice that both the church body and the Holy Spirit are given credit for sending forth Paul and Barnabas.

One of the implications in this sending is that the church and the missionary (church planter) have agreed on the location of this new work. To be sure that there is no confusion that this author is not speaking of the physical structure, the term "people group" will be used when saying, the "implication in this sending is that the church and missionary have agreed on the target people group." Colossians 3:15 should be employed here

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[10] Ibid., 64.

[11] James A. Alter & Dolton W. Robertson II. *Why Baptist? The Significance of Baptist Principles in an Ecumenical Age* (Sidney, OH: Ancient Baptist Press, 2008), 207.

[12] David J. Hasselgrave. *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally (Second Edition): North America and Beyond* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), 23.

[13] Ibid., 112.

(and everywhere else) when determining God's will. "If peace is not present, then one must wait upon the Lord before he moves one step, lest he walk in the flesh and fall flat on his face."[14]

Research is a key to determining the place (humanly speaking). With so many places that would make good places, there are countless locations and myriads of subcultures and people groups. There are lost people everywhere and the need is overwhelming without a location that seems right to Christ through His church.

> In any community it is important to find the most strategic location for building and evangelizing. Find out in which direction the city is growing, residentially. If at all possible, secure property in that direction. The Chamber of Commerce, realtors, and developers can help you determine growth factors of a city.[15]

Of course, this is not to say that the church planter should buy property first. However, the church planter should most certainly use factors like this in determining where to buy or rent a home for his family among the people group he is considering.

*Methodology: Audience Contact*

**After the missionary is sent out, they must make contact with the people group to whom they are sent. Paul gives the believer some guidance in 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 when he says "While working with Jews, I live like a Jew, but when working with Gentiles, I live like a Gentile becoming all things to all men that I may save some of them by whatever means are possible." This guidance tells the believer to, within the bounds of righteousness, blend in with the culture with which they seek to make disciples. It cannot be emphasized enough that the missionary is not to impose his culture[16] on others.[17]**

On the other hand, culture is a gift of God, but the missionary must not allow himself to become immersed in culture to the point where it becomes the end of the effort.[18]

*Methodology: Gospel Communication*

This is, of course, the objective of going. The gospel, as communicated by the apostle Paul is the death of Christ for our sins and His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). When a person believes on that truth for his eternal security, he is saved. Church planting—the process of organizing and establishing assemblies of believers is pointless if there is nothing to…"believe." There are, however, little previews of the Gospel with the lives of those who have "died" to the old man and are living examples of resurrection power. Romans 6:6 speaks of those who died with Christ and Romans 6:11 speaks of the new life made possible by the Gospel. In other words, the believer preaches the gospel when he can loudly say "Christ lives in me!" as Paul did (Galatians 2:20). "Such a realization will mean that wherever they may be over the course of a given day or week they really do represent Jesus Christ as his appointed ambassadors."[19] So it is with every believer who "walks in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16)—the same "Spirit" who testifies of Christ (John 15:26). One must not be quick to overlook the depth of this step. Hiebert points this out:

> Before missionaries go to another country for the first time, they often think of the great distance they must travel to get to their field of labor. But once they arrive on the field, the greatest problem to be faced is in the last few feet. What a shock! The missionary has studied for many years. He has traveled thousands of miles to

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[14]Sumner C. Wemp. *The Guide to Practical Pastoring* (Shelbyville, TN: Bible & Literature Missionary Foundation, 1982), 53.

[15] Ibid., 53.

[16] Charles H. Kraft "Culture, Worldview and Contextualization," *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: 4th Edition.* Eds., Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2009), 401; Kraft defines "culture" as the label given by anthropologists to the structured customs and underlying worldview assumptions which govern people's lives. Worldview is included in culture as the deepest level of presuppositions upon which people base their lives.

[17] Ibid., 400.

[18] Miriam Adeney "Is God Colorblind or Colorful?" *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: 4th Edition.* Eds., Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2009), 420.

[19] J.I. Packer & Gary A. Parrett. *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010), 169.

communicate the gospel of Christ. He now stands face-to-face with the people of his respondent culture and he is unable to communicate the most simple message![20]

Perhaps the largest issue with sharing the life-changing message of the Gospel is actually "decoding the Biblical message" [21] and "encoding"[22] it back into the culture wherein the missionary has set himself.

*Methodology: Congregating Believers*

Of course this is a critical time. Helping those who are converted to understand the necessity of community life—building a group of converts around the idea of the conveyance of truth, the care for others, and the corporate worship of Christ. The consistent example of the shepherd in the lives of his specific people group is essential. This means he must have a measure of sanctified stubbornness. He will want to stay even without a salary for an amount of time. The apostle Paul knew this well. **He continually reminded the churches at Corinth and Thessalonica that he provided for his own needs in their situations.**[23] This probably allowed him to, through the collective actions of these congregations, meet many other needs of both the saints in Jerusalem and the needs of fellow church planters.[24]

The number of congregants is not nearly as critical as the reality that some are congregating and that they are beginning to appreciate eternal things such as the purpose their new Savior and King has given them in the spreading of truth through multiple, like-minded (anchored in the one truth), heavenly-conscious assemblies of believers. This will mean that truth will need to be paramount—not programs.

If a pastor is to disseminate truth to groups of believers; and if this pastor is to preach the whole counsel of God; and if this pastor is to do so patiently—then a pastor can expect this process to take at least three years.[25] This love of truth; this joy of leading God's sheep beside still waters is not a quick process.

*Methodology: Leadership Consecration*

Leaders must be led. Hudson Taylor knew what it was to live by faith. This faith was observed by others through sharing generously of that which he had. He was challenged by Scripture in front of those to whom he wished to minister and he, like those of his future flock, was faced with whether he would trust the truth.[26] Leaders will lead as they are led. Those whom God appears to be setting aside for the work of the Gospel will be challenged to live by faith as they see it exhibited before them. Those leaders who are being considered to carry on the work will be faced with whether they wish to lead a typically American way of life or whether the main thing in their life is the dissemination of truth through God's assemblies.

Part of this faith will need to be cultivated in prayer. That is, it takes faith to pray—faith in the Scriptures that is. It also takes faith to keep praying. Is God able? Is God willing to fund and fuel His own program of multiplying assemblies? One thing is certain: if the church planter is not praying powerfully before he begins, he may find it difficult to get much done on the field.[27] Whether in the area of finances, or in the area of the changing of hearts, Hudson Taylor exhibited the power of God through prayer in England before departing for China. This was a faith that he would later teach through example to those first generation converts in his target people group.[28]

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[20] Hesselgrave, 426.

[21] Ibid., 427.

[22] Ibid., 428.

[23] Bruce Steffes & Michelle Steffes. *Your Mission: Get Ready! Get Set! Go!* (Linden, NC: Dr. Bruce Steffes, 2010), 14-15; Steffes reminds the reader that "we are so used to the truth that Paul had a tent-making career in Corinth that we forget that Christians other than those in Corinth helped him financially and in other ways…He did receive assistance from other individuals and churches. In Romans 15:24, the original language was clear that he was talking about money when he wrote and asked for support." However, from the viewpoint of the Corinthians and Thessalonicans, Paul was supported by those other than themselves.

[24] Dennis W. Bickers. *The Tentmaking Pastor: The Joy of Bivocational Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 10.

[25] Ibid., 15.

[26] Phyllis Thompson. *Hudson Taylor: God's Venturer* (Chicago: Moody Press, _____), 10.

[27] Ibid., 16.

[28] Ibid., 43.

*Culture Shock*

The world is not American. America is not even uni-cultural. There are subcultures within America's culture. It will take the grace of God in the planning stages to be fully prepared and in the actual mission work to be fully engaged while, in the planter's humanness, they may feel out of place.

> You can only hope and pray that you are not too miserable while you grow through it and that it does not leave you scarred. Even if you survive relatively unscathed, you will see those on your…mission trip who are having a really rough time—and the most affected may even be the career missionaries you are going to work with."[29]

It seems fitting, then, to say that it is an unreal expectation to feel right "at home" upon immediate integration with another culture. Taking the task a day at a time with a lifetime perspective seems to be the best approach. The marriage partner is doubtless the best "partner" one can have in the work of the Lord. Metering the stress in your spouse is of utmost importance.[30] Perhaps the most refreshing thing about church planting is that there is no Scriptural directive for how long it is supposed to take place. Speed up and slow down as God gives grace and refreshing.

[29] Steffes & Steffes, 186.
[30] Ibid., 189.