

ReachGlobal EFCA

Church Planting and Multiplication in the Bible - An Inductive Study Part II Application

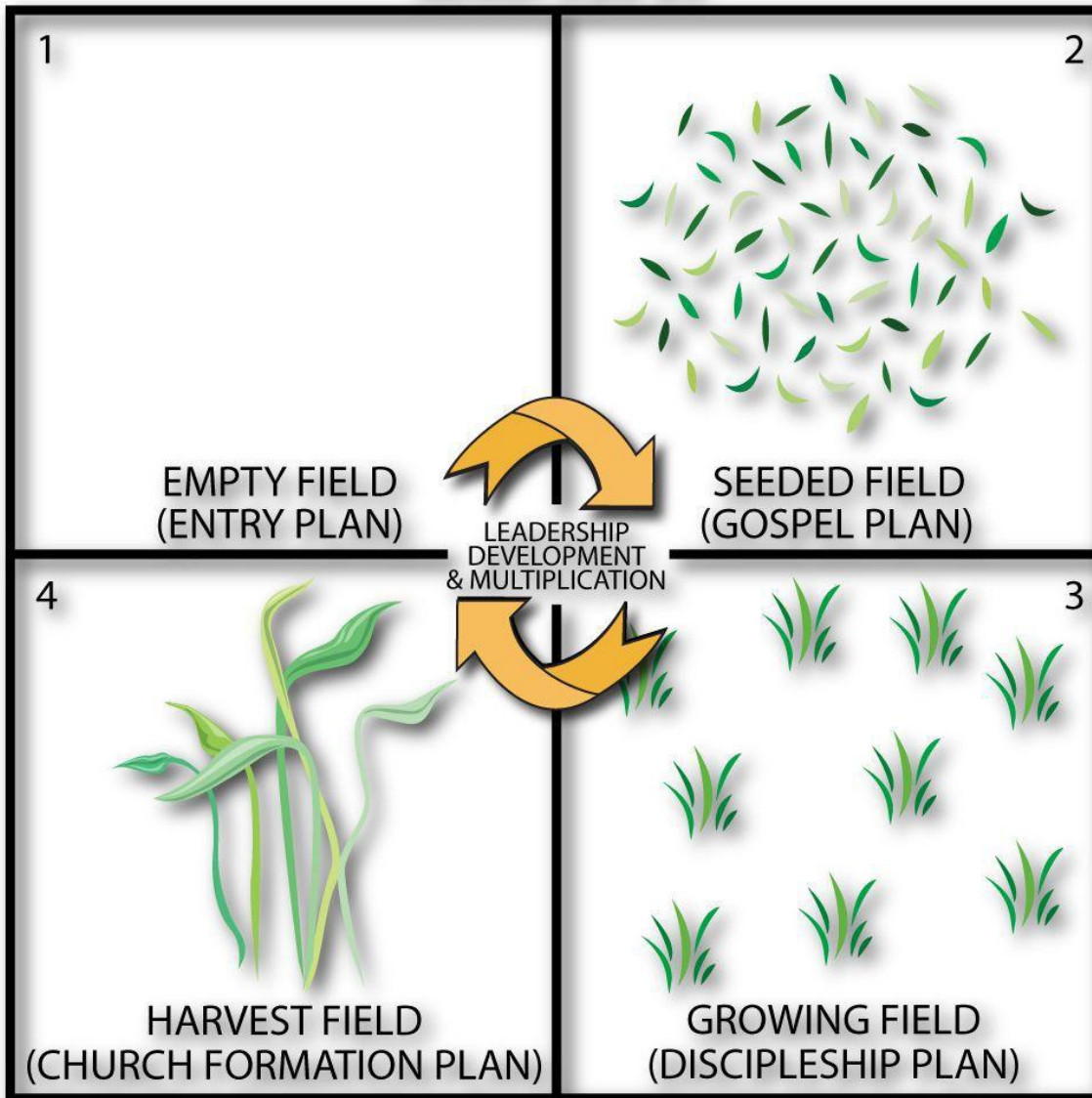
Gene Wilson



2010

Church Planting and Multiplication in the Bible - Part II Application

THE FOUR FIELDS OF CHURCH PLANTING MARK 4:26-29



Each field presents the farmer or church planter a specific question:

- Field #1 – Empty field: “How do we enter a new field?”
- Field #2 – Seeded field: “What do we say?” “Who do we say it to?”
- Field #3 – New growth: “How do we make disciples?”
- Field #4 – Harvest field: “How do we form the church?”¹

¹ Compiled and Written by: Nathan and Kari Shank, 2007.

These are the Four Fields of Church Planting.



Field #1 – The Empty Field



Like the farmer we must consider our method of entry.

Key Question – How do I enter a new field?

How do I enter a new field with the gospel?

Where do we start? How do we know when and where to plant? As outsiders attempting to enter a new place or cross long standing barriers with the gospel these questions demand consideration lest the church planter spoil the potential harvest through hasty or ill advised action. Understanding the biblical answers to such questions provides the church planter with a simple, clear strategy for transitioning from an outsider driven method to an insider movement. We will refer to the plans we receive from scripture as **“Entry Strategy.”**

Besides understanding biblical patterns and precedents like those Jesus gave his disciples when he sent them out and those Paul and his teams practiced, church planters must also understand the ministry focus people they are sent to reach. This requires learning the language and studying the culture. One must live among the people to observe basic social patterns such as:

What is the history of Mission work here? What attitudes do people already have toward outsiders?

Who in this society is respected enough to teach about spiritual matters?

What do they believe about God, the origin of the world, and about harmony or disharmony between God (gods) and people?

Are they collectivistic (group decisions) or individualistic in their decision-making?

Do the group leaders need to give permission for the group to listen to the gospel?

Who are the community gate keepers? How should they be approached?

The message of the gospel should address the basic questions such as the separation between man and God because of sin. What is their concept of sin? Are they a sin-based or shame-based culture?

What other questions are not resolved in their worldview?

Describe the worldview and values of the typical you are trying to reach.

View of God

View of the origin of the world

View of man's relationship to God

What is the most fundamental problem of man?

What solution does the religion/ worldview offer?

What do people value the most?

What do they aspire to?



Field #2 – The Seeded Field



Within the second field the church planter is faced with a simple question.

Key Question - What do I say?

What do I say to present the gospel?

Answering this question seems as simple, but the need to present the gospel across ethnic and social barriers is anything but simple. Understanding worldview, apologetics, and the essential elements of the gospel are all a part of answering this key question. A proper understanding of field #2 will provide the church planter with tailored, reproducible and effective tools for sharing the gospel. We will refer to the plans we receive from Scripture (*and an understand of the ministry focus people*) as **“Gospel Presentation”**

What are some key passages of the New Testament that express the gospel – the good news of Jesus Christ?

Based on their concept of God, man and their relationship, what “pre-gospel” clarifications should be made in order for the gospel to be received for what it is: GOOD NEWS?

Would it be best to use a “logical and sequential” presentation of the gospel like the Four Spiritual Laws, the Bridge to God, or the Roman Road? (These basically follow the following sequence 1) God created people and loves them, 2) But people sinned and rebelled against God so they are separated from Him, 3) They can’t resolve that separation through any personal efforts, 4) God resolved the separation by sending His Son Jesus to die for them, 5) They must accept this provision by believing in Jesus and turning from their sinful life to God.

Do they have a sacrificial system in their religion or worldview? If so, would it be wise to present the idea of a sacrifice as a peace offering to receive God’s forgiveness and favor. Jesus is the peace offering that God offered even though we sinned against Him.

Is there a gift that is offered to make peace between two warring tribes? Is there another “redemptive analogy” in their belief system that would help to explain the redemptive act of God in Christ?

Is the culture oral in the sense that the most important truths are passed on through narratives? If so, should Biblical narratives about creation, the fall, the sacrificial system and the cross and resurrection of Jesus be shared and discussed?

Are the people bound by fear of spirits and do they fall prey to spiritual bondage? Should Jesus be portrayed as the deliverer who overcame spirits, Satan and death?

Write out an outline of a gospel presentation that would prepare someone from this people group to understand and respond to the good news of Jesus. Use key phrases, biblical narratives and/or key biblical texts.



Field #3 – The Field of New Growth



Here the church planter begins to see the fruit of his labors. As the crop begins to emerge from the seeded soil, the farmer is faced with this question.

Key Question – How do I make disciples?

How do I make disciples?

Said another way, how do I promote growth? The beginning stages of growth are critical as they determine the future success of the crop. The crop is at no point more vulnerable. For this reason care must be given to present a purely biblical foundation on which future growth can be built. For this reason we will refer to discipleship plans (short-term and long-term).

What is a disciple according to the Bible (write your definition and support with Scripture)?

Describe the qualities that Jesus would like to see in His followers (profile of a disciple according to Scripture)?

What practices or spiritual disciplines did Jesus teach his disciples and expect of them?

What were the early communities of disciples like? What was most important to them?

Jesus told his disciple to make other disciples teaching them to observe EVERYTHING he had taught them (Matt. 28:19). What is the significance of the words “observe” and “everything”?

What are some truths that should be taught and observed by new disciples in the very beginning of their walk with Jesus?

Make an initial attempt at a short-term discipleship plan. Include meetings and activities, things done alone, one-on-one and in groups, lessons that must be learned and practices that must be observed.



Field #4 – The Harvest Field



This field represents the time of celebration. As the harvest is cut and bundled the church planter faces the following question.

Key Question – *How do I form the Church?*

How do I form the church?

Answering this question properly will ensure the long-term growth and health of new churches. The Bible has a large amount of material devoted to answering this question through both example and direct command. We will refer to the plans we receive from scripture as our plans for **“Church Formation.”**

The question makes it sound like the church planter(s) forms the church. However it is better to think of it as a joint effort between the church planter(s) and the core group of new believers. Part of growing as a disciple is to studying what the Scriptures teach about the purposes and ministries of a local church and putting them into practice in ways that fit the context. New believers will have a sense of following Christ as the Head of the church if they look directly to Him and His Word for answers. Correspondingly, church planters should be facilitators and catalysts pointing believers to the Word and helping them discover God’s answers.

When you look at the whole of the New Testament, what do you see as the key purposes of the local church? In other words, why does it exist? Why did God leave his church on the earth rather than take it right into his presence?

What did Jesus command his followers to do as a group?

What are some of the activities that the Jerusalem church (1st church) practiced consistently and were picked up by other churches?

What common expectations of traditional churches are NOT clearly mandated in the New Testament?



Leadership Multiplication



Finally the process repeats itself. As the harvest is gathered the farmer or church planter is provided two things. The first is sufficient food for the gathered church in the form of spiritual gifts and resources. The second is a multiplied supply of seed for the next season or field. The resources available lead us to ask the following question.

Key Question – How do I develop and multiply leaders?

Answering this question properly ensures a sustainable and multiplied harvest. When leaders are multiplied movements begin resulting in generations of rapid church starts. We will refer to this reset of the process as “**Leadership Multiplication**”.

How do I develop and multiply leaders?

Leader is not a common word in the New Testament. What other words are used to describe those who take responsibility in the local church? (1 Pet. 5. 1 Tim. 3, Titus 1)

What qualities were required of those who served in Acts 6?

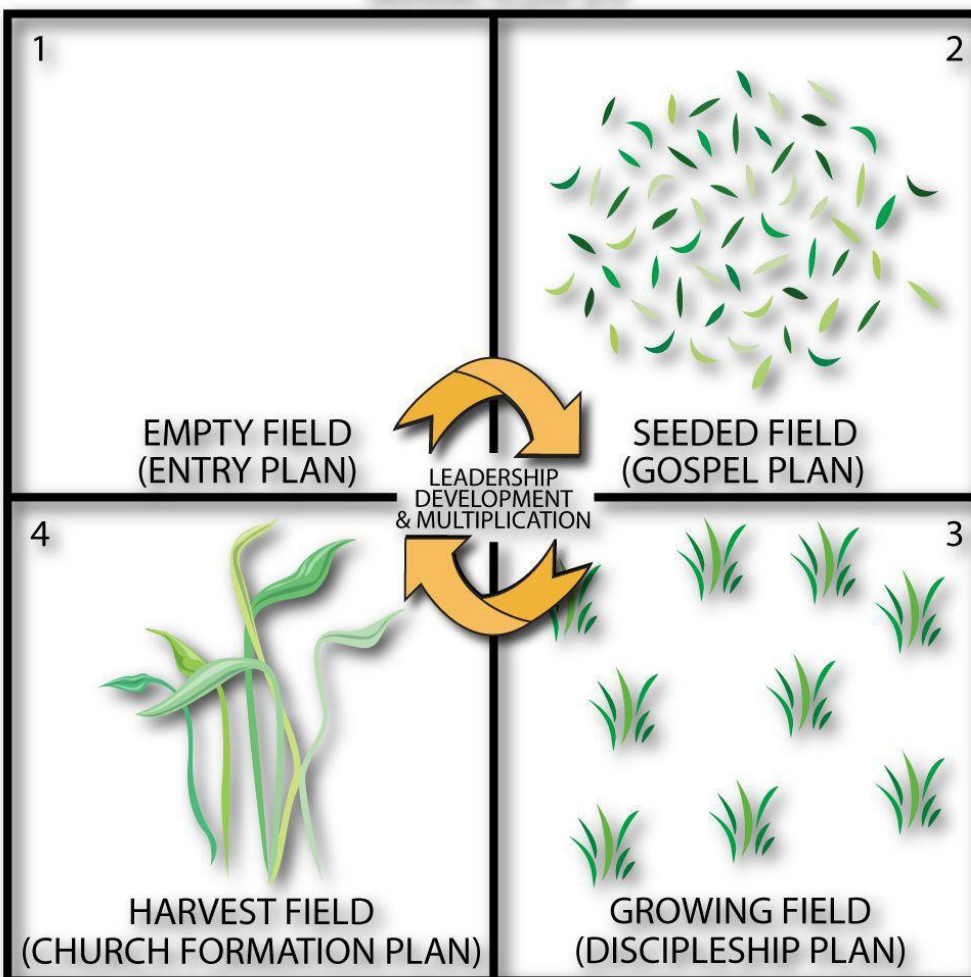
How did Jesus develop his followers into leaders so that they continued the mission after He ascended?

David Garrison speaks of the MAWL approach to leadership development, which he patterns after Jesus’ example. First you Model and they observe; next time you Assist as they make their first attempt; the third time you Watch as they do it on their own; the fourth time you Leave and they ask questions as needed. The idea is for local disciples to take responsibility for ministry and to do it in such a way that it is reproducible. The church planter must be the only trainer; others must be able to replicate the pattern. What advantages and disadvantages do you see in this approach?

In Conclusion:

In the center of the four fields you will see the word multiplication. That is because the cycle going from the empty field to the harvest starts over because new workers from the harvest are sent out to new harvests. The new empty field may be the next neighborhood, the next village or another unreached people group in the city. It would be hard to start new church unless this process discipling is going strong. Church reproduction occurs when multiplication is taking place at the other levels – new disciples, faith communities and leaders.

THE FOUR FIELDS OF CHURCH PLANTING
MARK 4:26-29



Collectively these five parts are known as: **“Five Parts of the Church Planting Plan”²**

Entry Strategy Gospel Presentation Discipleship Church Formation Leadership Multiplication

Credit for this part of the study called the Four Fields:

“The Four Fields”

A Manual for Church Planting Facilitation: Starting and Releasing Healthy Churches

Compiled and Written by: Nathan and Kari Shank, 2007.

We have further training available called Mobilization for Multiplication. This study goes through these five parts explaining them through 7 key practices for church multiplication.

Practice 1: Seeker Discovery

Practice 5: Developing Leaders

Practice 2: Process Evangelism

Practice 6: Corporate Worship

Practice 3: Disciplemaking

Practice 7: Organizing the Church

Practice 4: Creating Spiritual Families

**For these and other Global Church Planting Resources go to
www.globalchurchplanting.net**