

FINAL REALITY CHECK AND YOUR CHURCH PLANTING FUTURE**1. BASIC CHURCH PLANTER ASSESSMENT**

a. Assumptions in Assessment

- i. Church planting is unique work that requires unique gifts
- ii. The #1 human factor in church planting success is the planting leader
 1. Is the leader called to church planting?
 - a. Ephesians 4:11 ¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, (NIV)
 2. Is the planter spiritually, emotionally, and physically prepared for the challenges of planting?
 - a. Planting is stressful and requires a healthy leader
 - b. 1 Timothy 3:6 ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. (NIV)
 3. Is the planter in harmony with those who may be sponsoring the church plant?
 - a. Theological
 - b. Philosophical
 - c. Practical
 4. Does the planter have those who would speak well of them and their fitness for church planting?
 - a. The support of others is a confirmation of gifts and character needed for church planting
 5. Has the planter mastered the basic skills of ministry?
 - a. Preaching
 - b. Teaching
 - c. Leadership
 - d. Shepherding
 - e. Evangelism
 6. Are the circumstances of the church plant best suited to the planters effectiveness?
 - a. 8 key risk factors in planter effectiveness
 - i. Does the location fit the planters culture and background experience? 1-10
 - ii. How many ministry partners will join the plant from the start? 1-10
 - iii. How many pre-existing contacts in the location are open to joining the plant? 1-10
 - iv. How near is your family or friends to the location you are planting in? 1-10

- v. How close are you to other churches that are supportive of your planting work? 1-10
- vi. How much financial support will you receive for your work? 1-10
- vii. How much ministry success has the planter experienced? 1-10
- viii. How strong of a “Ridley Assessment” score does the planter have?
- iii. Assessment of a planter is best done by a team of 2 seeking human and spiritual insight
- iv. Assessment is not “once and done”
 - 1. Time and experience can mature a candidate
- v. Key principles in developing a growth and readiness plan
 - 1. Do not rush God
 - 2. Get a good mentor
 - 3. Get experience
 - 4. Become aware of your weaknesses
 - 5. Develop a plan to strengthen weaknesses
 - 6. Ask for feedback and input
 - 7. Stay humble
- vi. 2 key scriptures for future church planters
 - 1. 1 Peter 5:6 ⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. (NIV)
 - 2. 1 Timothy 4:14 ¹⁴ Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. (NIV)

2. ADVANCED CHURCH PLANTER ASSESSMENT

- a. Predicting planting success
 - i. God alone gives the gifts for ministry
 - ii. Many personality types are successful church planters
 - iii. Many church planting models and designs can be successful
 - iv. The best predictor of success as a church planter is behavioral
 - 1. Past behavior predicts the future
- b. The Ridley Behavioral Assessment
 - i. Dr. Charles Ridley has studied the behaviors of thousands of church planters
 - 1. His research has show that church planters that practice certain behaviors are more likely to be successful
 - ii. The Ridley model is the basis for a free assessment you will receive at the end of this session
 - iii. The following are the key planter behaviors
 - 1. Visioning capacity

- a. They have a history of starting projects and organizations from nothing
 - b. They overcome obstacles and generate resources
 - c. They stay committed
 - d. They initiate action, have vision, and draw others into the plan
2. Intrinsic motivation
 - a. They maintain a busy schedule with energy
 - b. They use time well and accomplish much
 - c. They do not need outside prodding
 - d. They always give their very best
 3. Creating ownership of ministry
 - a. They inspire others mobile for ministry
 - b. They give away duties to others
 - c. They develop others to their potential
 - d. They help and mentor others to become leaders and use their gifts
 4. Reaching the unreached
 - a. They have many current unchurched relationships
 - i. They are often with them
 - b. They have multiple examples of those they have led to Christ
 - c. They have disciplined many new believers they have led to Christ
 5. Spousal support
 - a. Does the couple have a clear sense of their roles in ministry?
 - b. Is their marriage tested and strong?
 - c. Are both husband and wife united in their commitment to church planting?
- c. Secondary behavioral qualities
 - i. Effectively builds relationships
 1. People skills
 2. Many friends
 3. Easy to relate to
 - ii. Committed to church growth
 1. Grown ministry
 2. Learning new methods
 - iii. Responsive to community
 1. Meet specific community needs
 - iv. Utilizes the giftedness of others
 1. Helps others know and use their spiritual gift
 - v. Flexibility and adaptability

- 1. Keeps an open mind
 - 2. Changes as needed
 - vi. Building groups
 - 1. Starts small groups that are effective
 - vii. Resilience
 - 1. Can bounce back after a difficult set back
 - viii. Exercises faith
 - 1. Demonstrates spiritual vitality
 - 2. Demonstrates call to planting
- d. Scoring a Ridley Behavioral Assessment
 - i. The first five categories are the most important
 - ii. The amount of data – or specific examples – merits a higher score
 - iii. The intensity or complexity of an example merits a higher score
 - iv. Each category is scored individually 1=low, 5=high and then all scores are collected
 - v. A Ridley should be scored by a trained professional

3. CHURCH PLANTING LANDMINES

a. BLIND SPOTS

- i. No church plant begins expecting to fail
- ii. What you know you don't know and what you don't know you don't know
- iii. The value of studying failures vs. studying success

b. IGNORING PERSONAL HEALTH AND GROWTH

- i. Midlife in ministry
 - 1. Ages 35-55
- ii. Abusing
 - 1. Finances
 - 2. Power
 - 3. Sex
- iii. Pride
- iv. Physical health
- v. Neglect of family

c. DISARMING LANDMINE #1

- i. Maintain a coaching/mentoring accountable relationship
- ii. Maintain spiritual disciplines
 - 1. Walk with God
- iii. Retreat
 - 1. Daily
 - 2. Weekly
 - 3. Monthly
 - 4. Annually
- iv. Be a life long learner

d. LACK OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- i. The temptation to be “the leader” rather than “the leader of leaders”
 - ii. Failure to identify potential leaders
 - iii. Failure to train and raise up leaders
 - iv. Failure to create a leadership development culture in the ministry
- e. DISARMING LANDMINE #2
 - i. Develop a working definition of leadership
 - ii. Pray the Lord of the harvest
 - 1. Luke 10:2 ² He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. (NIV)
 - iii. Look for Christlike servants
 - 1. Teachable
 - 2. Faithful
 - 3. Obedient
 - 4. Available
 - 5. Willing
 - iv. Training them intentionally
 - 1. I do – you watch
 - 2. We do
 - 3. You do – I watch
 - v. Coach them monthly
- f. LEADERSHIP BACKLASH
 - i. A surprising negative reaction from a leader to your leadership
 - ii. People not on board with your vision
 - iii. People who have a prior experience
 - iv. People who you have not carefully evaluated
 - v. People who are not able to follow
 - vi. People who see problem but are not loyal
- g. DISARMING LANDMINE #3
 - i. Discern if they are on board with your general vision and values
 - 1. If not – caution
 - ii. Discern if they are personally supportive of you
 - 1. If not – caution
 - iii. Do not give away titles prematurely
 - 1. Elder
 - 2. Deacon
 - iv. Do not form an internal board prematurely
 - v. Test people before you “title” them
- h. PERSONAL EVANGELISM ENTROPY
 - i. Pre-launch of church planting usually requires high evangelism work
 - ii. Caring for new believers can be time intensive
 - iii. Launching regular weekly worship can be time intensive
 - iv. Weariness can cause the planter to limit their relationships to believers

- i. DISARMING LANDMINE #4
 - i. Update your time management skills
 - ii. Develop a “spiritual mentor” team for new believers so you can stay focused on evangelism
 - iii. Pray for new contacts and stay connected to places where you can meet them
 - iv. Ask your people to introduce you to their non-believing friends and demonstrate evangelism
- j. CORPORATE EVANGELISM ENTROPY
 - i. If the church does not evangelize it will die
 - 1. Evangelism entropy can creep into a church within a few weeks of their 1st public service
 - ii. People are swept up in “urgent” needs of the body
 - 1. Meetings
 - 2. Pastoral care
 - 3. Logistics
 - iii. People neglect the real areas of priority
 - 1. Assimilation
 - 2. Leader development
 - 3. Evangelism
- k. DISARMING LANDMINE #5
 - i. Teach your people to pray for their non-believing friends
 - ii. Train people to share their testimony
 - iii. Train people to invite outsiders
 - iv. Train people to maintain relationships with non-believers
- l. INADEQUATE ASSIMILATION
 - i. If you reach them you must also keep them
 - 1. Evangelism and discipleship go together
 - ii. If you reach them and do not keep them you must ask why
 - iii. People may not return because they
 - 1. Did not feel welcome
 - 2. Did not understand the message
 - 3. Did not receive a personal invitation
- m. DISARMING LANDMINE #5
 - i. Seek to get feedback from those who do not return
 - 1. Why did they not come back
 - ii. Invite people to a follow up gathering small group
 - 1. Share a meal
 - iii. Develop a welcoming team that is responsible for showing hospitality
 - iv. Review your preaching and be sure it is understandable to a new attender
- n. FEAR OF MONEY
 - i. Most pastors do not want to talk about money thinking it will scare people away

- ii. It is not about what the church needs, it is about what God wants
 - 1. Generosity
- iii. Failure to talk about money keeps people from deep discipleship growth
- iv. The pastor works without financial support and the ministry cannot reach its potential
- o. DISARMING LANDMINE #7
 - i. Stay biblically grounded
 - 1. God owns it all – Genesis 1
 - 2. People are stewards, not owners – Matthew 25
 - 3. Stewardship is a learned behavior – 1 Timothy 6
 - ii. Teach stewardship regularly
 - 1. Time
 - 2. Talent
 - 3. Treasure
 - 4. Earn
 - 5. Give
 - 6. Save
 - iii. Be an example and then “ask”
- p. UNDERESTIMATING SPIRITUAL ATTACK
 - i. Tough times come to ministry because
 - 1. We live in a fallen world
 - 2. We make foolish choices
 - 3. We make sinful choices
 - 4. We face spiritual battles
 - a. Ephesians 6
 - ii. Church planting will suffer from all of the above reasons
 - iii. Spiritual battle often comes as
 - 1. Discouragement
 - 2. Fear
 - 3. Physical opposition
- q. DISARMING LANDMINE #8
 - i. Develop and maintain your prayer team
 - ii. Do not give a “foot hold” to Satan
 - 1. Confess sin
 - 2. Stay humble
 - 3. Walk with Christ
 - iii. Times of fasting and prayer
 - iv. Times of prayer for healing and deliverance
- r. PREMATURE LAUNCH
 - i. Most churches do not grow large because they do not plan on it from the start
 - ii. Moving too quickly to public worship takes all the energy and resources of the people and pastor

- iii. The pastor often feels the urgency to have worship services when they should feel the urgency for evangelism and discipleship
 - s. **DISARMING LANDMINE #9**
 - i. Establish small groups as simple and reproducible house churches
 - ii. Develop multiple house churches before a larger public gathering
 - iii. Develop multiple house church leaders to build your leadership team structure
 - iv. Focus on evangelism, discipleship and personal relationships with non-believers
 - v. Start public worship after several house churches
- 4. **MENTORING LEADERS AND PLANTING NEW CHURCHES**
 - a. The culture of reproducing leaders starts with the development of the church plant
 - b. Reproducing the walk with Christ starts within your own home
 - c. When mentoring church leaders, let them reproduce their own walk
 - i. Good habits
 - ii. Spousal response
 - iii. Child response
 - iv. Help them to succeed in developing a reproducible walk with God
 - d. Mentoring is leading people into a reproducible walk with God
 - e. When mentoring a leader, help them to make their walk with Christ is there
 - f. Walls when mentoring a leader
 - i. Not really sharing the truth about each other's lives
 - ii. Leaders who are not positive
 - iii. Leaders can be polarizing without being intentional of being polarizing
 - g. Mentoring is to get the strengths of the corporate church without taking away from the family
 - h. As you are planting churches, look for leaders to plant more churches