

Recommended Reading List for Church Planting

A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders, Reggie McNeal (Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, 2000). One of the most important works of spiritual leaders is to know their own “heart” and the forces that have shaped them. This book identifies the areas of significance that affect all leaders for good or ill. This will help persons in ministry identify the forces and understand how that affects their ministries.

Big Dreams in Small Places: Church Planting in Smaller Communities, Tom Nebel (Church Smart Resources: St. Charles, IL 2002). Many planters are needed in our major urban centers. But not everyone can work comfortably in those cultures. This book helps persons think about church planting that will bring a “harvest” in smaller communities. It focuses on key issues and relationships.

Cell Church Planter’s Guide, Robert E. Logan and Jeannette Buller (Church Smart Resources, 2001). One of the four major models of church life is that of cell church. In some instances a cell church will become a simple or house church and produce other autonomous house churches. In other instances a cell church can be a part of a cell-celebration model. This practical guide provides clear directions for beginning and reproducing cells.

The Church in Many Houses: Reaching Your Community Through Cell-based Ministry, Steve Cordle et al (e-book download). Talks about shifts that need to occur in mental models in order to start and grow cell churches.

Church Planting in the African American Community, Michael Cox and Joe Ratliff (Judson Press: Valley Forge, PA, 2002). In spite of its title, this book provides a broad range of ways that churches, of whatever ethnic or cultural background, can use to help sponsor new churches.

Coaching Church Planters: A Manual for Church Planters and Those Who Coach Them, Steve Nicholson and Jeff Bailey (Association of Vineyard Churches USA, 2001). The first part of the book deals with coaching which has application to working with leaders of all churches. The second part of the book gives an overview to intentional church planting for those operating in a Euro-centric culture.

Doing Church as a Team: Launching Effective Ministries through Teamwork, Wayne Corderio (New Hope Resources: Honolulu, HI, 1998). How does a pastor/planter grow ministry and the church? Individual efforts cannot accomplish what teams can. Understanding the insights and instructions of this book will enable leaders of new churches and their teams to move forward with significant ministries.

The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church by Alan Hirsch (Brazos Press: Grand Rapids, Mich., 2006). This book is a call to re-orient the church to mission. Examining two great apostolic movements (early church and current-day China), Hirsch offers both biblical and theological insights to motivate the church to become the church in mission.

Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition by Christine D. Pohl (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, Mich., 1999). For most of church history, hospitality was central to living as a genuine disciple. Pohl reviews church history as well as biblical insights to help readers and small groups begin to make the practice of hospitality a reality in their daily lives.

In a Pit with a Lion on a Snowy Day: How to Survive and Thrive When Opportunity Roars by Mark Batterson (Multnomah Books: Colorado Springs, Colo., 2006). Batterson is lead pastor of the team that started National Community Church, a new church plant in Washington, D.C. Currently, this new church operates as one church in three sites, meeting in movie theater complexes at Metro stops. The book deals with facing our problems as opportunities.

Planting New Churches in a Postmodern Age, Ed Stetzer (Broadman and Homan Publishers: Nashville, TN, 2003). This book addresses cultural issues that are specific to postmoderns through the lens of churches being missional. It does not offer models but attempts to “help you think like a missionary to the people living in the culture of postmodernism.”

Planting Missional Churches: Planting a Church that’s Biblically Sound and Reaching People in Culture, Ed Stetzer (Broadman and Homan Publishers: Nashville, TN, 2006). A reworking and refocusing of his earlier work to deal with issues of culture of the people being reached by a new church. This book is the more important of the two for planters.

Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century: A Comprehensive Guide for New Churches and Those Desiring Renewal, Aubrey Malphurs (Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI, 2005). One of the most comprehensive books dealing with church planting built upon the “attractional model,” it identifies and instructs church planters and their teams about the six stages of the new church.

The Ripple Church: Multiplying Your Ministry by Parenting New Churches, Phil Stevenson (Wesleyan Publishing House: Indianapolis, IN, 2004). This is a practical book that includes principles of reproduction of new churches with emphasis upon “Kingdom growth.”

The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st Century Church, Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch (Hendrickson Publishers: Peabody, MA, 2003). This book clearly identifies the challenges of the church in Western Culture. While experimenting with missional activity themselves, the authors attempted to learn from others who are also attempting to be incarnational and missional.

Starting a New Church: The Church Planter’s Guide to Success, Ralph Moore (Regal Books: Ventura, CA, 2002). This book challenges people to consider becoming a church planter as well as covering the basics that are needed for starting a new church.

Starting High Definition Churches: Leading Clearer, Larger, and Brighter Than Before, Ron Sylvia (High Definition Resources: Ocala, FL 2004). Provides a rationale for intentional planning with specific milestones and stages to work through in the planting of churches that launch with momentum for continued growth. The author gives some details that are often critical for the successful launch and growth of a new church.

Transformation: How Glocal Churches Transform Lives and the World, Bob Roberts, Jr. (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, MI 2006). Following the principle that any enterprise must “begin with the end in mind,” this book reveals what the “end product” should look like in order for a new church to impact its community and its world for Christ.