

Church Planting Conference Session 5 - The Launch Service

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[0 : 00] These sessions were recorded at the Church Planned Conference hosted by the Our Generation Training Center and Vision Baptist Church. It is our desire that you'll be able to learn from these great speakers as they talk about the topic of church planting.

Am I working now? Alright, sorry about that. There's a mute button and I had it pushed in. Alright, good. Well, the subject that I've been asked to speak on this afternoon is about how to promote the launch service.

We've talked about a lot of specific things in the biblical principles in the morning that was fantastic about what the church is and how churches are started. Churches start churches and all those kinds of things.

And we've heard now two sessions about who can start churches and how to involve people in the church plant. And really I want this session to be kind of something that can just spark your mind and your creativity and the brainstorming abilities you might have to look at the context that you'll be starting a church in and see how to promote the launch service.

And when we talk about launch service, we're talking about when you get the church started. Your first service, your first weekend. How can you take that first step and maximize it to the greatest ability or the greatest power?

[1 : 20] And I think there's a few biblical principles and a lot of practical principles. And I'm going to tell you some of the things we did in Chile. I'm a missionary working in Santiago, Chile. And I think that some of those things might help you to think about where you're going to be at.

And there might be some things that you could do in a similar way. All right. So here, I think you all have the notes. They're stapled to the back of the notes that you guys got earlier. So you can see there the launch promotion.

The first thing that you have there, number one, meet as many people as possible. Meet as many people as possible.

And I want to show you a few things from the Bible to explain why we should meet as many people as possible. And then we'll talk about maybe a few ideas of how to meet as many people as possible.

Brother Jessup in the morning said that one of the big problems when you go to start a church is typically you don't know anyone. So you're showing up in a town where you might have a few contacts, but you probably don't know more than a handful of people.

[2 : 21] And you're going to try to start a church, but that's very difficult to do. And I know in this room, probably at least half of us, if not more, are working overseas or going to work overseas.

And in those contexts, you know, it's almost for sure that we're not going to know many or any of the people that are living in the cities that we're living in and working in.

So we have to meet people. Let's look at a few passages in the Bible. If you'll turn with me to Acts chapter 14. I know 1 Corinthians comes first there on the list, but actually, you don't have Acts 14 on your paper.

If you see that letter B, it says biblical philosophy, and there's a blank beside it right in there. Acts 14, 21 through 23. Acts 14, 21 through 23.

The good thing when you're preaching and you haven't given out notes, you can just change things up in the middle and no one has a clue. But when you hand out handouts, you should probably follow the handout, but we're going to skip around a little.

[3 : 20] Acts 14, 21 through 23. Does everyone have it? Good. You got to give me a little bit of feedback. I know we're kind of in the middle lull of the afternoon, and so we're going to try to stick with it here.

Look what the Bible says. This passage, 21 through 23, is like the classic church planning missions passage in the Bible. If you don't know what the Bible says about how to start churches or what missions is all about, this gives us in a very concise place in the Bible.

Just a few verses tells us what it's all about. Look in verse number 21. And when they had preached the gospel to that city and had taught many there, they returned again to Lystra and to Iconium and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith and that we must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God.

So what you have here in verse number 21, they're announcing the gospel, preaching the gospel, evangelizing people. Verse number 22, confirming the souls of the disciples. Maybe in another word that we've used today, discipleship, helping those new believers to build their faith and put their roots in the Lord in God's word, confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith.

It's not going to be easy. There's a lot of tribulations, a lot of difficulties, but we're here to continue on. Interestingly enough, in that passage, just a few verses before, we find that Paul was stoned and left for dead, but he got up and kept preaching the gospel.

[4 : 51] And so when he told them, it's not going to be easy that you've decided to follow Jesus, that had a lot more meaning than it does today. Although today, there still are a lot of difficulties and tribulation.

The Bible teaches that, no doubt about it. Look in verse number 23, and when they had ordained them elders in every church and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believe.

So you evangelize and then you disciple and then you establish elders or put pastors there in those churches and turn it over to the Lord. And God hears the church, and now you're the one that's going to be leading this thing, and here's the pastor that we prepared.

He's in the place that he needs to be. That's what missions is all about. Show up in a city and you win people to the Lord, help them grow as God calls them to preach, prepare, and help the pastor to get into position.

And that church then goes on to live for many years, decades, until the Lord comes back or until they decide not to continue doing what God wants them to do. As we already saw this morning, a church can die, but we pray that's not going to happen.

[5 : 58] So what does all that have to do with a launch service? That's a great question. All right? The end goal in missions is to have that elder to put into place. The end goal in missions is to train men.

And I think you've heard it this morning, and it's very wise that you can't start churches. It's not maybe the best idea to start churches until you have somebody to put in that church.

And maybe one guy could pastor two churches. Maybe some kind of Superman like Jeff Bush could pastor up to three churches at one time. But one person can't pastor more than maybe two, maybe three if he has a really good staff at each one of the churches.

But you can't go very far. You have to train men. So if we're looking maybe in the smallest circle of people that you're working with, the men that you're training for the ministry, that at the beginning they don't exist.

They're nonexistent. You don't have guys you're preparing for the ministry because you're just launching the church. Well, where are those men going to come from? They're going to come from a little larger group. Verse number 22 of those that are having their souls confirmed, those that are growing, those that are in discipleship.

[7 : 09] Well, where are they going to come from? Well, they're going to come back in verse number 21 from those that heard the gospel and accepted Jesus. So you have a small circle over here of those that are preparing for the ministry, a little broader that are people that are growing in their faith, a little broader.

Those Christians that have accepted Christ and then you get a little broader and you have those that are unbelievers. So the unbelievers and some get saved and some go into discipleship and God leads them into the ministry.

So the end goal is to have this man over here leading the church. So if we can have this first circle that goes from unbelievers to believers as wide as possible, then we have that many more people to work with from the beginning to help them grow in their faith.

And you have a lot more young men that might go into the ministry in the future as God leads and they grow. And my biggest question that I have for guys that are going out and starting churches, why would you start a church with four or five people when there might be a possibility to start a church with many more people?

And as church planners here, all of us would agree. Of course, if I could have my choice of starting with 75 people or eight people, 75 is a lot better option. How many are in agreeance with that?

[8 : 28] All of us are in agreeance with that. So what if we take just a little bit of time, because what I'm going to discuss with you from here on out is a lot of theories or practical applications from some things we see in the Bible.

What if we can think about how we can reach the largest amount of people in the shortest amount of time and make the biggest impact on the city that we're going to and the place we're working from day one.

I have some very close friends and I'm not going to tell you what country they're working in because I could probably name several friends in several countries. This that told me specifically to my face.

You know, we're just going to start small start in our house and maybe start with two or three people and then just as the Lord leaves grow. And is that is that wrong? Is that out of God's will?

It's not sin. I mean, if you're starting with five or 10 or whatever and you want it to be like that nice and small, it just seems illogical whenever we've been called to reach the world with the gospel.

[9 : 29] Amen. And so let's think some principles about how we can reach the most amount of people in the quickest amount of time. First Corinthians 3, 6 through 7, the Bible says, So what do we do?

We plant, we water, but who gives the increase? God gives the increase. All right. So we know the law of the harvest. As you plant, you will, as you sow, you will reap, right?

And there's a lot of different principles in the Bible that talks about that from the Old Testament into the New Testament, Galatians 6 and here in this passage in 1 Corinthians. And so there's a lot of principles about that.

So if you sow, because our job is to sow the seed, if you sow four or five seeds, then you'll probably expect a harvest that's equal to or comparable to the amount that you sowed.

If you sow 25 or 30 or 40 seeds, then you should expect a harvest that would be comparable to the amount of seed that you sowed. And, you know, when we talk about these different launch promotion goals or principles or things that you can think about, they're work-oriented goals.

[10 : 46] They're not result-oriented goals. If you go and you work toward having a huge launch service and put a lot of time and prayer and effort into the planning and a lot of work into it, and the result, that's in whose hands?

We're called to water and to plant, but who gives the increase? God gives the increase. Jeff was just talking about that, about how, you know, we do everything possible. He said somewhere in there that only God uses short men.

I don't know what that was about. And Jim Roberts and I are getting together afterwards to try to vote. I think we can, I think God could use some tall guys, too. We might be ugly. We might be tall. But I don't know where that short man stuff comes from.

I think he says he didn't say it. But I think anybody else hear that, about how God only uses short men? All right. There's all the tall guys raised their hand. I don't know what that is. All the tall guys. All right.

But anyway, it's a work-oriented goal, not a result-oriented goal. So we're not talking about results. If you have 10 at your first service or 30 at your first service or 100 at your first service or whatever it might be at your first service, the result, that's in God's hands.

[11 : 51] But the work side, I think there's some creative ways that we can work and we can plan to try to reach as many people as possible from that first day. And I'll give you a few of the things we did in Chile.

And you can take the ideas and make them a lot better and figure out how they can work in your culture. I've left a lot of space here for examples because I'm going to ramble a little bit about things that we've done. And you guys can think about in your context, some ideas that might pop into your head or some of the examples that I might share.

You might want to write down. So letter A, the goal is a spreadsheet with several hundred contacts. A spreadsheet with several hundred contacts.

As we started the church in Chile, I had a goal. You might think this is a dumb goal, but my goal was I want a spreadsheet that will have the detailed information, first name, last name, address, age, email address, telephone number, as much information as possible about as many people as possible.

And I'm not talking about people, you know, you find something on the Internet of people that live in your area that has all their information. That would be kind of creepy. But I'm talking about gathering information from as many people as you can meet because point number one is meet as many people as possible.

[13 : 06] And when you meet them, get their information and try to grow a spreadsheet to be as long as possible. Hopefully with several hundred contacts that's up to your first service and including your first service by that time, if you can have several hundred contacts on a spreadsheet is phenomenal because then you have a base to work with, to visit, to follow up, to soul win and to disciple and all those other things.

Invite people to different activities in your ministry. But try to be intentional and organized about the contacts that God might lead your way. So we have letter A, the goal is a spreadsheet with several hundred contacts.

We saw here that we need to plant and we need to water those seeds and we need to be getting as much of that seed out as possible. And we saw in B, the biblical philosophy for the launch promotion, Acts 14, 21 through 23.

C, look for footholds, footholds in the community. Footholds. Footholds. The idea there is there's a place to put your foot so you can get further, so you can climb higher and look for a place where you can, how are you going to meet people?

Most church planners that I've met along the way, their concept of how to meet people or how to start a church. Well, you know, put a sign up and we, we began to start services and preach the gospel and, you know, just do it and God will bring it all together, I guess, or something just kind of.

[14 : 32] But how can we meet people? What can we do to meet people that are there in your particular community? Some of the things we've done in Chile. One of the things, and for all you foreign field guys that are working in non-English speaking countries, we've used English classes.

It's a great way to meet people in the community and have them come into your church. So what do we do in Chile? In Chile, six weeks out, we started October 23rd of 2005, our first church.

Six weeks before that, we handed out in the community to 10,000 homes. We went door to door and handed out 10,000 flyers. All they said was, we're having English class at this new church.

So we rented a building, put a sign out in the front that had the church and the service times and everything, and put a sign below the sign that said that we are inaugurating the church on October 23rd. So this was back like the first of September.

We're handing out 10,000 flyers that were offering English classes for the following week. And that, from 10,000 flyers that we handed out, we had 150 people come, 148, 149, 150, I don't remember the exact number, but right around 150 people come and signed up for the English class.

[15 : 47] So we had about a 1.5% return rate on the English classes in our community. And we've replicated that process in several different occasions in different churches that we've worked in.

And we pretty much have about a 1.5%. So 150 people will show up if you hand out 10,000 flyers. Handing out 10,000 flyers in Chile, we go door to door, just throw them through the gate.

The houses are very close together. There's about 16 houses per acre. And so there's, you know, houses are lined up one after another. And to do that, it's about 48 hours of walking.

So 48 hours of walking. I did it with one other guy. So the two of us working together, walking for 24 hours, not in a row, over about a three-day period, eight hours per day. And so you're walking about 25 miles a day for three days.

You can hand out 10,000 flyers in our contacts. And the good thing about that is there's no mailing expense involved. And when you're out on the street, you meet people.

[16 : 49] And when we met people on the street, what did we tell them? We're trying to meet people. I'm going by handing out flyers. Here's a guy right here. I say, hey, how's it going? My name is Jason. What's your name? Will.

Will Hill. That's weird. Your name rhymes. Okay. So Will Hill. What were his parents thinking? And so here's Will. The first thing that I'm thinking is fantastic.

He looks like he's probably 20-something. He might be a good future pastor. And I think that if I could put a focus on him, maybe we can start the process of unbeliever to salvation, to discipleship, to future pastor.

As a missionary, the first thing I think of when I see young people is they could be a future preacher. They could be a future pastor. I went to a church in Alabama just a few days ago, and I got there early, and there were three Mexicans in the house right next to the parking lot of the church, and they were all drinking.

Well, they were having choir practice in the church, so I thought, I'm going to go talk to these Mexicans about the Lord. And I went over there and began to talk to them, and they were all around 25 or 30. And in my mind, I'm thinking, if I lived here, those guys could be future pastors.

[17 : 56] And you might be thinking, that's a crazy way of thinking. Well, that's just a missionary way of thinking. So I'm thinking, Will Hill, all right, before I leave you, I want your name, your last name, your address, your age, your phone number, your email address.

I want everything about you. Well, I can't just go up and ask them, so I've got to start chit-chatting about whatever. So I stop for a few minutes and ask questions. And before you know it, hey, you know, maybe I can come by your house and give you a little information about what we're doing here at this church.

And what's your address? Where do you live at? You live over there? Well, good. I'll come by and see, you know, what's the name of that street? Okay, great. Let me just write this down because I don't remember. Okay, great. How old are you? Good. Do you use email?

Go ahead and give me your email address. Great. And so I'll give you a call if I can come by. What's your phone number? And just keep asking questions. And the kid is like, I don't know who you are. It doesn't matter because if you get a long spreadsheet of people, then later you can follow up on this guy.

Hey, Will, remember we saw each other 10 days ago and we were talking in the street. You don't remember? It doesn't matter. Let me tell you about what we're doing. But he'll probably remember. And so you keep going by.

[19 : 00] So you can hand out 10,000 flyers. And while you're doing it, especially in Latin America and many other countries around the world, people are all on the streets. I was soul winning with a guy from Myanmar, Burma, just a few weeks ago in South Florida.

And he said, it's so strange here in America because no one's in the streets. Everyone's in their house. And they go from their house to their car. And they go somewhere. They come back and they go right in their house. And it's hard to find them. You've got to go knock on their door.

Well, a lot of places around the world, you don't have to knock on their door because they're walking in the street or they're walking to the store or they're walking to the bus stop. And meet those people and talk to them and try to find out their information.

If you could go out for three days, for eight hours a day and walk the streets and hand out flyers and come back at the end of the day with 20 or 25 contacts.

And you have somebody else doing that, too. I mean, you're racking up 50 contacts a day. We're trying to meet people, trying to organize their names and information so that later we can follow up on them and tell them about Jesus.

[20 : 03] And hopefully God will do the work in their heart. All right. So we use English classes. Another thing we've done on a lot of occasions is use movie nights. Use movie nights. We've gotten teenagers together and show them facing the Giants.

You might say, well, that's American football. It doesn't matter. It's a cool movie and they like it. So we get them all together and just like you can watch a movie about rugby or soccer and you still think it's good if it has a good storyline. We've gotten families together and couples and show fireproof.

I hope that ministry keeps putting out movies because we show them in Chile. And so movie nights and especially in lesser developed areas, you know, movie nights can be a big thing, especially if you build it up like it's a big thing.

Even here in the States, you know, I've heard of churches that have used different movies and things. So as you have contacts, you go through those contacts. All right. We have 79 that are families that are married.

Fantastic. Let's go to those 79 houses and tell them we're having a movie night for families and we're going to offer free child care. And they're going to have a place to play and some games and things.

[21 : 05] And they can come in and we'll have some snacks or whatever. And see if we can, of the 79, see if we can have about 20 show up and maybe about three will be saved. And maybe one or two will go into discipleship.

And those people can form part of the church. I mean, it's all the Acts 14. Well, it's the Bible philosophy. But what we saw there in a concise way in Acts chapter 14. We've used English classes, used movie nights, sporting events.

I'm not very good at sports, so I didn't do it very much. But I know people have used sporting events. Try to go into an area where there's a bunch of teenagers and organize some kind of campeonato.

What do you say that in English? Like a tournament. Thank you. We organized a tournament where maybe there'll be a prize and different teams can come and play and have a date and have a special speaker. If you're good at sports, do it.

It's great. Some people have used medical teams. If you can have a medical team, especially in underdeveloped countries, that can be a big blessing. We had one come down. There was a lot of difficulties with the government.

[22 : 05] And they ended up not letting us have it near our church. So we saw a lot of people saved. But we didn't have a church close by, unfortunately, to follow up on that as much as we could have done.

Kids' events. Kids' events were great because kids, what do they have? They have parents and sometimes older brothers and sisters. So if you organize some kind of kid event, maybe there's a big play that you're going to do in a park and you hand out a bunch of flyers about it.

Or maybe you're having some kind of like a fall festival day. I know a lot of churches have been doing that kind of thing in this time of the year. Think of some kind of children's events where you can invite people there at the beginning.

Maybe even before you start a church. What if you had a date, like October 23rd is what we used to start the church. And let's say on October 1st, you're going to have a big fall festival kind of thing.

And you're thinking, well, we don't even have the church going. It doesn't matter. You're trying to meet people, right? Meet people. You start English classes that are going once or twice a week. What if the students don't come? It doesn't matter if they drop out, if they don't think it's that interesting.

[23 : 07] Just get their information. Be their friend and follow up with them with a nice letter thanking them for coming and see if they'll invite you in their house so you can be better friends with them and pull the Bible out and tell them about Jesus.

Amen? And so see what you can do to gain a foothold into the community to be able to advance further. But if you're having, you know, movie nights and kids' events and all these different things and your spreadsheets building and people in the community think, oh, this weirdo that's come into our community with some cultish kind of religion because that's what they look at us as.

I'm speaking as a missionary because Baptists in most countries, it's like a really odd thing. Then we can help them understand that we're normal and we love them and we want to serve them and we want to show them and tell them about a God that loves them and cares about them as well.

And so there's ways that we can gain a foothold into the community. All right. So look for the footholds in the community. Go where people are. You know, if there's community events or if there's street markets or if there are, you know, door to door, if no one's out in the street, go door to door, do whatever you have to do.

We've a lot of times go into a community and find out what times do the high schools, the middle schools and elementary schools or the way however it's divided in your area, what times do their classes end and when are all the students coming out the door?

[24 : 33] And several big events that we've tried to organize, a sporting event, a movie event or whatever, kids event, we'll have it listed because there it's not all the same time. Each school has a different schedule.

So we're over here handing out 2,000 flyers as this school's getting out and then we're driving about four minutes away and handing out a bunch of flyers for this school that's getting out. And the next day we know the two other schools we want to hit.

But thinking, where are the people and how can I meet them and how can I be with them and know something about them? And if they expressed a little bit of interest, start a conversation and get their first name, last name, address, as much information as we can.

And when you make those visits, when I go to a visit, Will Hill, my goal is, all right, does he have brothers? Brothers are more important to me because they get to that pastor position better than sisters, but I care about the sisters too and parents.

If so, I want their names. I want their ages. I want to know what's going on. Does he have friends that live next door? If so, what are their names? And let's write all that down and let's start following up and try to reach people in the community.

[25 : 34] If you say, I don't know anybody here and I'm going to put a sign out there and hope people will come, it's not really a good idea. It's not really going to be that effective. And sure, you might win some people to the Lord, but I think there's ways that we can spread the net a little wider, have some more hooks in the water, and reach more people with the Lord.

All right, here we go. Meet as many people as possible. I think we've gone through all that. Letter E, use the Internet. Use the Internet. In the States, a lot of churches get more visitors through the Internet than any other thing.

In Chile, we get very few visitors from the Internet, but the Internet is still a tool that is used and is beneficial. But even what's more beneficial than just an opening website for us are things like Facebook or Twitter and setting up Facebook groups so you have your first youth event and you tell them all, great, we're going to start a group that's called whatever the name of your church is, teenagers, or maybe even think of another name that sounds like it will be something interesting and get all of them to sign up and post videos and tag their photos when they were at your event and begin to have conversations and different things.

I saw yesterday that a 21-year-old guy that's training in the ministry there in Chile, that's the youth pastor at the first church that we started, he was tweeting with Kerry, what's his name, the guy over at West Coast, Kerry Schmidt, thank you.

They were tweeting back and forth. He was doing it in English. I'm thinking, you don't even know English. I guess you're using Google Translator to go back and forth. But this is nuts. And we think, well, you know, I'm not going to get involved in all that technology.

[27 : 17] And, well, you're dumb not to. Amen? We should use the Internet and use social media, especially if you're trying to reach young people. And young people are the ones that will be the most probable candidates for this pastor role in about four or five years as God grows them and leads them.

Amen? So we should be smart about that. And those things obviously need to be adapted in every culture. But pretty much through cell phones and smartphones, even in underdeveloped countries, most people have Internet access and are involved in that kind of thing to some extent.

All right, number one, meet as many people as possible. Number two, invite as many people as possible. Invite as many people as possible. You might say, that sounds a lot like number one.

Well, it is. We're talking about a promotional Sunday or a launch promotion. And in order to do that, you don't only need to meet them, but you need to invite them. Modern marketing says that it takes seven to eight impressions before someone remembers your product.

Now, I'm not into all the marketing stuff and we should build our churches based on marketing. I once heard a missionary say that God cares more about integrity than he does about all those other things that you can read about in those church planning books.

[28 : 35] Amen. But here's the deal. Here's what we do typically. And I'll include myself in the group. All right, let's have a big promotion in the community.

So let's send out a mail out or flyer or handout or whatever you're going to do. Let's just do a big 10,000 and we'll blanket our community. And let's wait about maybe eight, 10, 12 months and let's do it again.

And let's wait about maybe another year or so and let's do it again. And each time the people have how many impressions or how many contacts, how many touches, how many times do they see your church visibly?

Well, if this is true, that human nature, because today we're bombarded by products and companies and junk mail and all these different things that are just constantly demanding our attention.

If someone has to see or hear about us seven or eight times before it actually kind of registers with them. And I know in South America, it's much like here. There's advertisements everywhere. We're working in the middle of the city and it might even be worse than here.

[29 : 38] And so how can I get them to remember the first church we started Faith Baptist Church? How can they remember that? Oh, yeah, there's a church started on the community because remember, there's like houses and buildings nonstop as long as you can see in every direction.

There's a lot of competition for their mind and their thoughts about different things. Well, if it takes seven to eight going at the rate of every 10 to 12 months, they're not going to remember the church for six or seven years.

But because they have short memories like myself, they're probably never going to remember. But what if in a six week period, once a week, we make the rounds and we hand out 10,000 flyers to the same exact houses?

So week one, we put a blanket down, English classes. Week two, some kind of introductory flyer. Week three, some other kind of introductory flyer. Flyer, week four, the same thing, but different words, but it's all pretty much similar.

In week five, you do it again. Week six, you do it again. I mean, here these people are six weeks in a row. Every Tuesday afternoon, they're receiving a flyer. The first week, they're like, huh, trash. The second week, they're like, huh, I think I've seen this before, trash.

[30 : 47] Third week, they're like, this looks with same color, same eye, but it's like different content. Week four, what's happening here? Yeah, week five, they're like actually taking the time maybe to read it.

Week six, this is weird. Who are these people? We started at the first church, for the first week, we did an English flyer.

The second, third, fourth, and fifth weeks, we did just a general introduction kind of flyer that said who we were. Being sensitive to the culture without compromising the truth.

In other words, Catholics, which is where we work, the majority of the people are Catholics, they refer to the Bible in a large way by the term Holy Scriptures.

And for them, the Trinity is very important because they think all outsiders don't believe in the Trinity and mainly from the Jehovah's Witness or Mormon background or whatever it might be. So here we are doing flyers that say, we believe in the Bible and we trust the God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and we teach the Holy Scriptures.

[31 : 50] So if you want to know about who we are and what we're doing, that's who our church is. And that's not at all compromising the truth. If I witness to a Catholic, and I did this a couple of weeks ago here in the States, my very first comments are, whenever I find out they're Catholic, oh, really?

Well, we believe in the Bible and nothing else. We don't have other books. And we believe that God is God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. And we believe Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary.

And she's just a great example for all of our ladies. And I would like to tell you a little bit more about Jesus. And you say, well, why would you talk that way? Because when I do that, the Catholic, instead of wanting to hit me, which they wanted to do at the beginning, they're smiling and like, oh, great.

I thought you were one of those weirdos, but you're not. And then you can tell them about what the Bible says. And so I think that we should try as much as possible to make an impact on the community in a way that is not going to offend them.

But I know the cross is offensive, and I'm not trying to be a liberal here. But when we're introducing ourselves to the community, let's try to do that in a way that people will lower a little bit of their defense and will be interested to hear what's going on.

[33 : 03] So here we have invite as many people as possible. Just to give you an example about money, the prayer cards that I'm using right now, we got 5,000 printed for like \$97 or something like that.

Philip Basham was my contact, and so he can give you the best place to go. And he changes like every two weeks because he finds people that go like \$1 cheaper or like 89 cents cheaper. I'm just kidding. But he's the contact, knows everything.

So 5,000 were printed for \$94 or \$97. I don't remember. If you think about doing \$10,000 per week for seven weeks, to have seven impressions or seven contacts with the people, you do the math.

But what you're looking at is somewhere around \$1,400, \$1,500, which isn't that much money. Now, I know in the States with the mail outs and the stamps and the delivery, it's a lot more money.

But if you're living in an urban area where you can do a lot of door-to-door walking, just maybe seven or eight miles a day, which after a while gets kind of tiring. But if you can do it for a short period of time, then it's possible that for a low budget, you can make a big impact on a community.

[34 : 12] And when you talk to that person, I talked to Will Hill, that was one impression. I sent him an email because he left me his email address. That's another impression. I give him a call. That's another impression. I go by his house and visit him. That's another one.

At the same time, he's receiving flyers at his house. So, I mean, if you really work it in every way possible, then it's possible that on that first service, you might be able to launch with momentum and not just launch with two or three people that are attending the church.

All right. So emails, phone calls, mail outs, letters, use it all to its maximum ability depending on the context that you're working in. Number three, and I think I have, what, like two minutes left or so.

Remember the law of large numbers. Remember the law of large numbers. We've already discussed this. The goal is to do everything possible to launch with as many people as possible.

First Corinthians 3, 6 through 7 is talking about how we plant, we water. He gives the increase. So do as much as possible. In our example in Chile, the English class flyer distribution part, 10,000 people brought in 150 attendees to our English class.

[35 : 23] So that gives us about a 1.5% receptivity. And the church stuff, the church flyers, the church introductory things, we handed out more like 7 times 10 because we did a lot of different rounds of the same stuff.

So somewhere in the ballpark of maybe 60 or 70,000 because actually the last week we doubled up and did 20,000 instead of 10,000 to try to really hit the community the week before we started.

So after doing all that, we had 140 people come to our first service. And so 140 people based on 70,000 impressions, you pretty much get about 1.4.

But we've done it since then where we've handed out 10,000 one blanket and seen pretty much no reception or no return on the investment.

But when you do it time after time after time after time in a short period of a few weeks, then it can really make a big impact in the area that you're working in. And so here's my whole encouragement for you all today.

[36 : 24] Be creative in thinking, how can I go into that first service with as much momentum and running as fast as we can and reach more people and make a bigger difference in less time by thinking maybe a little outside of the box?

Just to help you because some of you might be thinking, wow, we started with 140. So what is the church today? We had 140 on first Sunday. And with my brilliant leadership abilities, we grew that church to 95 on week two.

And we had it all the way up to 70 on week three. Week four, we were about 40. And that's pretty much about where we leveled out. But not 40 at one service. We had about 20, 25 come to the morning service.

Another 20, 25 come to the night service. 140. They were just curious bystanders from the community that thought, who are you people? And what are you doing?

And why are you so excited about this little tiny building you have? And you're telling everybody about what you're doing like crazy. But we had 40 people. The average independent Baptist church in Chile that is two years old or 20 years old, if all the independent Baptist churches in Chile, they average 40 people.

[37 : 33] And so I don't say that at all about my abilities because we knocked it down from, we had a contact list of about 400 people by our first service. And we had 150 studying English and 140 that were coming, that came to the first service.

But if you work a lot of, if you have a lot of different openings, a lot of nets out there, then I think you can reach more people with the gospel. Anyway, I think I left out, if you guys want to see that, there's the rest of that.

I forgot about our, our visual aids up here. Are you guys getting all that? Good. All right. Well, appreciate it. Maybe something was a little bit of a blessing. All right.

Let me get Trent, Trent, I mean, Jeff and Chris and Jason to come right back up here and sit in these chairs here. We'll have the tall man, short man fight.

Jeff, Chris and Jason, if they would. And we'll see if you have some questions. Praise the Lord. Anybody need an iPhone?

[38 : 35] Does anybody have any questions? If you don't, I'm going to ask them a few. And I'd like it if you get mics to them because it is being watched.

And we'll see what people have to say. Talking about the launch, Jason, how much time do you need before your launch with all your invites? Y'all have mics up there, right?

I need one more mic for those guys. What do you mean? How much time do you need before? How much time? Yeah. Before you do your launch.

When you get to the field and you launch the church, how much time are you spending inviting people, meeting people, building your spreadsheet, all this stuff? I'll just tell you about our example.

I didn't know what I was doing. I went into it. And there's a lot of things that we've kind of tweaked or tried to do better. At the time, I had nothing else to do because if you don't have a church and you're a full-time missionary and you're just trying to plan toward one getting started, we ran into a building in August.

[39 : 34] And in August, I had everything ready on the inside and the sign on the outside so we could start English classes and later have church services. We started with a lady and two children.

I didn't share that part. But we had a contact in the community of a lady and her two children. And during that whole time, we were doing Bible studies. And as I met people and people were saved, because several were saved during those six weeks, we invited them to the Bible study.

So we actually were having seven or eight, ten people coming every Sunday morning and every Thursday night, which was our midweek service, before our launch service. So there was a small group of, and I say seven or eight, outside of my wife and my kids.

We had a few people that were building together. But during those weeks, I mean, we were working pretty long hours to get it going. So it was six weeks? Right. August, we got the building ready.

September the 1st through October 23rd was. You have to understand that he and another man probably spent 40 hours or more a week on the road handing out information.

[40 : 35] Is that correct? 24 hours of nonstop walking. And then we would follow up on those people as we met good contacts. For us, we're missionaries. So we're thinking about men we need for the Bible college that didn't exist and didn't exist for about three years.

So we're making our spreadsheet and we're picking out number one. Let's get all the guys from 15 to 25 and let's follow up on them first. And then we need people that can support the church. So let's follow up on families from like 35 to 55 because they can maybe give some financial stability.

I don't think that's maybe spiritual. It's really pragmatic. But that was kind of the – so we were following up when we weren't actually walking and handing out stuff. And at the same time, you also had some Peruvian – like the designers doing stuff, sending – like he may not have that to start with.

So you can just say that – We contracted out all the construction for the church, the remodeling, contracted out all the design work and had other people doing stuff. And when he said another guy, there was a Peruvian, a Peruvian Bible college graduate.

They came and worked as – he was coming to work as my assistant for three months just to help us do this whole pre-launch plan. And ended up feeling like God was calling him to Chile and worked with us for about two and a half, almost three years.

[41 : 48] And now he's pastoring another church in Chile. Let's – Jeff, tell us how did you launch? How does what you did compare to what Jason did?

Different country? How did it work? The first – the first two churches we started were like what Brother Jason was saying, starting that way.

The last two actually were started out of the first church that we started. In other words, that the last church had seven families that went over to a certain area they live in and they helped start that church.

And so that was an advantage for the last two churches. And I think that would be – that's obviously better, you know, in some sort. But at the first, we couldn't do that because we didn't have a nucleus of people that we could do that.

So kind of like Jason, we got there in January, I think January 22nd, January 21st of 2004. And on March 21st of 2004, two months later, we started the first service.

[42 : 49] We went in. We looked around. I even talked to a pastor that was, I think, in a convention. And he was a man from that country there. And I just asked him where different churches were.

And so he told me in a specific spot in town that there was no churches around that area. So I kind of chose that area because I don't like fighting and I didn't want to fight any other people.

So I chose that area and that's kind of where we started. We found an old, you know, storefront. We began to fix that up. And then like Jason, we passed out thousands of brochures.

We got in the newspaper. Everybody that I talked to, I tried to invite. And so when we had that first service, then we didn't have a whole lot, but we invited, you know, tons of people.

Did you not use the radio? Yes, sir. I don't remember if we did. I think we did for the first time. But I know for later, you know, the big events and stuff, we used the radio as well. So we tried to get in everything that we could, you know.

[43 : 50] Chris, what did you all do in the churches you started? Well, you know, the church we're in now, we started with no money, no location, no nothing. And then God just blessed it. Relationships in the community, very strong relationships in the community.

Dig into their community, love the community, build the community, love the people that are around you. And we were very close to some soccer players. David was a big part of that. And some people came to Christ.

And then they ended up bringing their friends. Our church is probably the most messed up church you could ever go to. Like when we started this church, we had good attendance. But you would go on Saturdays, and David was in charge of the youth ministry.

And he'd be teaching and preaching in the youth ministry. And then, you know, they were going to the nightclubs getting drunk after that, you know. So with David. No, not with David. But like literally they would finish the youth group, which was a Bible study.

And then after that, they were going to nightclubs. And so, you know, God's grown a lot of the people. And God's really helped them grow. But with us, it was a lot of relationships that we've built with people over the years. And we have an advantage that, you know, most missionaries don't have.

[44 : 57] And that, you know, I was a missionary kid and grew up there and know people. I'm all about marketing. And I'm all about pushing stuff in any way you can. I believe we have the greatest thing in the world to ever talk to people about.

And I believe we ought to use every tool we can to do that. And so integrity, but use marketing as much as possible while having integrity. By the way, you do know that when we started the church, long before I knew any of these things that we're talking about, our preachers and leaders all continually messed up.

If you're not willing to swim in sewage, you probably won't help very many people. If you're not willing to help people, you're not willing to go down and get them as they fell back in the pit, get them back out, get them out the mouth, clean them off and put them back to work.

You're probably not going to do much. You're not starting a church with other people like you. Another, I also have another question. Chris. You mentioned that, Jeff, you mentioned that you started one of your churches and seven of your families went with to help start that other church.

And Brother Jessup said this morning about, you know, you can't make people do things. What was the response of those seven families? How did that play out? Did they just say, hey, we want to go do it?

[46 : 16] Or did they, did you have to talk to them? Was it a prayer thing? Right. The way our city works, everybody, majority of people use bus, train, taxis, bicycles, and they walk.

And so when we were, when we originally started, we were in town. And so all the people that were around different sections of town, they all took buses into town. And so that's where the center was. That's where all the buses went.

So that's where our church was. They went there. Well, later on, we moved on the north side of the city. So it would be over here. And when we moved on the north side of the city, the people on the outskirts, they all had to, there was nothing that would come straight over.

So all the buses would take them into town. Then they'd have to get another bus from in town to come to the north side of town. And although it wasn't that far in a car, that's how the bus systems worked there. And so that actually, you know, now I look back and I think, well, that's how it should have been.

But it wasn't because I necessarily planned it. The Lord put it that way and even helped me, kind of pushed me to do what I believe is right, which is now all these people, the one on the south side, we have a bunch of people who lived there.

[47 : 22] And so we just started a Wednesday night Bible study instead of them coming to our church. On the north side, they just had a Bible study there and one of the Bible college students taught it. And then afterwards, it developed into a church. And so most of them already lived there.

Same way on the west side of the city, we have several of those families, at least seven families that live there that take two buses to come to our church. And so when we started that, then, you know, we had obviously, I had been there and we had dinner and we'd been talking about these plans before we took it public.

And so they were all in agreements. You know, I want to make sure they were in agreements before we did this big thing. They were all in agreements. We want to do it. You know, this is our location. Problem was that I couldn't.

And these guys were going to continue to be faithful, taking two buses to church. But they, I wasn't going to get anybody else out of the area. So starting this church, they realized they were going to be first one so they could reach all their community.

So it really worked out. That kind of unique situation. And how long was that? Like a two bus ride? What does that mean time wise? Right. So ours is at least most of the bus rides, probably 45 minutes.

[48 : 22] And it's not a long ways away. But you have to wait maybe 20 minutes for the bus. And you have to get on the bus. And then you have to get there. Well, a lot of times it's cold.

It's rainy. We don't have the best heating system in Argentina. And so, I mean, people, it gets tiring getting on these buses, driving them everywhere. And it's expensive to drive, if just you and your wife, two passages there, two passages for the next bus, and then back and forth.

And if we want them to come Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night. I mean, it becomes expensive. So it actually is very convenient for them. Works out well. We started our third church, or the third church in Peru.

I told everybody, we're going to start this church. It was a mile away. I said, we're going to start this church. And if you want to go, go. Some went, and some from this church traveled all the way back to the other church.

And some that lived right next to the new church still came to the first church. You know, you let them do what they feel like they want to do and where they feel comfortable. I don't think you need to push them. I kind of want to steer this just a second because I can just hear a man going to Maine saying, none of that works in my community.

[49 : 32] Y'all are talking South America. I think most everybody else is probably headed overseas. Well, Brother Bateman's not. A couple of guys over here. So if you three, anyone can answer.

But if you were doing this in America, I know you don't have experience here with that exactly. But would what you're saying work here? And give a comment on that. English classes probably won't work here.

We've used those in Peru. The question is adaptability and culture. That's what the question is. It's not a question of what you do.

In my opinion, it's not a question of what you do. It's a question of how to adapt. Number one, what moves your culture? What makes your culture move? What do we, you know, what the community, what is it about?

You live in America. You're a, I'm not, your people are crazy technology. You're crazy. And I am too. So I'm saying that people are laughing. So, you know, to use whatever those tools are.

[50 : 32] And no matter where you're at. So you've got to find what the people are using. You've got to use those tools to be able to reach people. We've got to go to where they're at to reach them. So I don't think English classes are not going to work. In Peru, we use soccer to reach people.

But there's all, look at what the church can do that nobody else can do in the community or that nobody else in the community is doing. And see how you can fill that gap in. Because there are tons of things that need to be done that if there was a church that said, hey, let me be a part of that, I believe you could be a part of that.

But to do that, you've got to be a student of culture. And you've got to know what people are doing. And culture gets harder and harder to understand as our world goes more and more global. You know, Peruvian culture used to be so, you know, it's just Peruvian culture.

And then all of a sudden they throw Facebook in there. And I was just in Albania and I was preaching and somebody said, I was just talking about culture. And they said, yeah, Facebook. And that's what they called it there. And that was their Facebook.

And in Peru, it's Facebook. And, you know, it's just like, it's crazy all around the world. So, of course, things are changing. But see what moves culture. If it's football, get involved in football. If it's soccer, get involved in soccer.

[51 : 39] Get involved in something. People are asking questions. And a lot of times we're busy answering questions nobody's asking. It's like nobody cares to know what you're talking about because you don't even know what anybody's asking.

So, I would say what are people asking? What are people in your area passionate about? What do they get mad about? What do they hate? What do they love? And those will show you some of the passions that will lead you to see some of the cultural things that they're doing.

So, and, you know, English classes. In English classes in Albania, they say don't work because everybody there speaks three and four languages. Like, literally, I was, everybody, I say I speak two languages here.

And people are like, wow. In Peru, I tell them I speak two languages. They're like, wow. In Albania, I say I speak two languages. They say, you know, totally different. So, your approach is going to have to be different. But see what they're passionate about, what they're angry about, what frustrates them, what moves them, and then go from there and answer the questions people are asking through the Word of God.

That's, you know, that would say it's a good start. I think a difference I've seen in myself being here in the States. In Chile, every time I go into a store, every time I meet somebody on the street, every time I see someone, if I'm within a mile of the church, I'm thinking, you know, this could be the future song leader at our church.

[52 : 54] This could be a lady that could be leading children's ministries. This is somebody that we could see saved and disciple and reach her family. And my mindset is every person that you see is a possibility to be won by the Lord and be developed and be a worker in the ministry.

And I think that a lot of times here in the States, especially from here, maybe that's the difference. I don't know. We grow up here. We just normally go in and out of stores and normally meet with people. In Chile, every single person that goes to our church, I'm thinking, all right, I want to talk to you because I want you to introduce me to your neighbors or introduce the national pastor to your neighbors, to other friends you have.

I'm talking to the teenagers in our church saying, you know, what if we all work together over the next three weeks to try to invite a thousand people via Facebook that go to high schools that are within a mile?

Because there's like six or seven within a mile of where our church is. What if we tried all together using all of our influence, all of our contacts, all of your neighbors? You know, the mindset is just about meet people and get to know them and lead them to Christ.

And I think a lot of times in the States, I find myself, and I imagine maybe many of you are like that, we don't think that way. And on the mission field, that switch that in my mind clicks, shouldn't click, it should be the same here.

[54 : 10] And all of us, I think if we think about it, the people that we have, even if you have a class of four or five people, our church is seven or eight, 10, 12 people here in the States. I think you can work to realize that among you, you have an influence capability of reaching out to several thousand people.

And so what can you do to maximize that impact and be intentional about it, building relationships and leading people to Christ and through discipleship and training them for the ministry? Jeff? I think that's a little bit of probably a little bit of what everybody said and something maybe really simple, but my story would be I grew up in churches and even going to college.

You know, the majority of people probably have the concept that their pastor is untouchable. And the honest truth is none of us, I don't know, maybe you have a good relationship, praise the Lord, but a lot of people, they feel real distant from their preacher.

And you know what, when we feel, when we can actually talk to our preacher and they spend time with us and teach us, well, that goes a whole long way. And you'd be surprised the concept.

I grew up and I heard really big preachers when I was in Bible college and stuff, but those guys you can only see way far away. And I think Chris just put on Twitter, on Twitter, TweetDig, whatever it's called, yesterday, you know, you can impress somebody by far, but you can only impact them up close.

[55 : 36] And the truth is, if you'd be surprised, I think it would work totally, no, it would work here in the States. If you just get a hold of some of the people and as a pastor or as the leader, if you spend some time with them, you'd be utterly surprised at how much they want to do in church.

I mean, they would really get involved, really get fired up. They would think, man, this guy really thinks that I'm something else. And he would really go forward. And I come from a background that my family, we didn't have a lot of money.

We were nothing really in church. And I remember now that I look back at different things, I think, wow. But you know what? Nobody had any hope in my life. And Brother Austin just maybe putting a little bit in me and sharing different things with me, I thought, man, I could do this too.

And, you know, I guarantee there's a bunch of nobodies in your church, but if you get a hold of them, man, they could really begin. They'll be your next Bible college students. They'll be your next preachers, your next girl Sunday school teachers in the nursery.

You'd be surprised just putting a little bit in somebody's life. Here's a couple of practical things you guys can do here in America. I like learning, and I constantly am asking questions.

[56 : 45] Learn to text message people versus sending them out the same letter that you've been sending people for the last 15 years that we started with a house church manual doing. Nowadays, we're using text messages.

They were speaking to a youth pastor in South Dakota who took over the youth ministry. He was already part of the church, and he grew the youth ministry from four to about 40. And I said, what's the number one reason, the number one way you've done this? He said, I started text messaging, and I get the number one thing I want from all young people is I want their cell phone number.

He said, so I get their cell phone number. I said, this is what we're going to be talking about this week. And as soon as I say it, so he's sending a bunch of people that way. He's sending people tons of text messages. So those kind of things will work here in America. Start a podcast up where you share what the local businesses are in your city.

Just take a camera and go eat for free at a place and talk to the owner of the local Ma and Pa eating place. He's going to say, what in the world? You say, well, Vision Baptist Church cares about your community and cares about your business.

And we just want to hear about this. And so people that are moving into the community are looking. They look for a church. They look for whatever and look for what's good in Alphabet. And when they look at it, they go. There's a podcast that talks about food. And it's just the church caring about the community.

[57 : 49] There's little things like that are practical things. And I could literally go on all day with ideas like that that would work in America. Peruvians don't use podcasts. They don't do like we do here in America.

But here in America, they do. So just look at using new tools in the same way that you used to use them. People consider text messaging, for example, to be personal. So you just say, hey, man, thanks for visiting with us today.

And you text message the guy out. Who cares if you have his street address? You've got his cell phone number. You've got his email address. So use those things to be able to reach out to people in different ways than what you've always done in the past necessarily.

And the past things aren't bad. We're changing our times. The way people communicate is different. It's a social network. And Facebook is not a program.

It's the way people communicate one with another. So take those tools and use them to be able to reach out to other people. I've got a 15-page booklet on using social media for your church.

[58 : 48] If you're interested, you can talk to me later, and I'll send that to you as well. I taught a class on that. So that might be something to help you. By the way, if you were to go, you know, if you consider what Jason said about giving out 10,000 pieces of literature a week for six weeks, there's not any area anywhere that wouldn't be like what's going on.

Let's just be honest. If there was a way that you could get out 10,000 pieces of literature every week for six weeks, there's no way that there wouldn't be somebody wondering what's going on.

So these things work. We may not can afford them. Our problem here would be more affordability and gated communities and that sort of thing.

But I would challenge you. I don't think you should look at this and say that works in Argentina, that works in Chile, that works in Peru, but it doesn't work here. When we started this church, we made 80,000 phone calls.

And it didn't work as well as it ought to have had because I think I made some personal mistakes about what we said. But we've sent out tons of material. And we have a very good family in our church that said that every time they threw away the invitation, it kept showing back up.

[60 : 06] And that is why they are here tonight. And they are both very, very, very fine, very sweet people. I was in a Bible study on Tuesday night with the man in that family.

Some men were in another man's house and I was there teaching. And he was just, I mean, you could just, his eyes welled up with tears as he learned the grace of God and the things that God does.

So I think we can get in touch with them. I want to let, we'll answer one more question. I'll just say to you that, you know, I want to start more churches. Because I was going to take this hour.

I felt like we didn't have the time and I'm glad you got to hear from the guys. But I'll tell you this. Here's what I really, really, really believe. There are not many Bible preaching churches anywhere.

And I don't, they don't need another Dr. Phil. And they don't need another Oprah Winfrey. And they don't need another Joel Osteen.

[61 : 08] They need somebody that just opens the Bible and says, this is what God says. And when it comes down to it, and everybody said this today, everyone has said the same thing.

That is this. It is Jesus who builds his church. It is him that builds his own church. And so I'm going to give out all the material. I'm going to send out as many things as I can.

I'm going to send out all the texts I can. I'm going to use Facebook all I can. I'm going to work as hard as I can. But I know it's going to be God that's going to have to bring the people. And God is going to do the work. So you know what, you know, and you know what he's going to want to bring them to?

He's going to want to bring them to the word. He's going to bring them to the word of God. He wants the Bible opened. And he wants them to be taught. And so when I was young and starting my first church here in America when I was 23, I was taught by big shot leaders to visit all week long and to do everything else all week long.

And God would take care of the sermons. And so I was supposed to work all week and then Saturday night get messages. But, you know, I can't remember what famous preacher, maybe it was D.O. Moody, who said something like this.

[62 : 25] If you keep calling the sheep to eat and there's no food, they'll quit coming when you call them. And so we ought to learn the Bible. All right.

Would there be one more question for these guys before we have some supper? Anybody have a question? Five seconds.

All right. Thank you so very much. And just we'll have Robert come in just a second. We'll have supper. He'll explain to you what's going on about that. Then we'll have the service tonight.

And, of course, they'll have to redo this room here and get it ready for church. Tomorrow morning, Brother Jessup should be speaking for three hours. We'll have some questions and answers and just a lot of things.

I really appreciate you coming. I have been motivated and challenged personally that we should be starting more churches. Our church is a very missions-oriented church.

[63 : 22] I would dare say that our ministry, if you add up our ministries and all, we start more churches than just about anybody. But I'm not doing a good job at all in America.

Not at all. And so I hope you're challenged and motivated for us all to go start more churches and get the name of Jesus out there a whole lot more than we are already.

Brother Robert. Thank you for listening to the Church Planting Conference hosted by the Our Generation Training Center and Vision Baptist Church. You can find the complete series of recorded sessions by logging on to www.sermonaudio.com forward slash Vision Baptist.

Thank you.