Church Planting Conference Session 4 - Getting Others Involved

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[0:00] These sessions were recorded at the Church Planting 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.

Alright, grab your lesson there and let's look over a couple different things. I'm super, super nervous for being up here. I feel really inadequate getting to share this.

So, just share a couple different things here that hope can maybe be a blessing. This morning we were talking about church planting and obviously the big picture would be that there's a big need for more churches.

Obviously we need more churches in the states and the foreign fields and all over. But as we break that down, we need to see the sections of the big pictures. And if you break it down, maybe you would see that in churches obviously we would also have a problem and that we need some people.

And the topic that I am going to be speaking about or discussing is involving people in the ministry. Now I've got a couple of verses written down there and I've got some more on my notes. So let me just say quite a few different things on introductory and then we'll jump it right into the lesson here.

Obviously the Lord told us that the fields are ripe unto harvest, right? John chapter number 4 and 35, the fields are ripe unto harvest. But then over in Matthew chapter number 13, he told us that the field is actually the world.

So we know the field is actually really ready. But as well as you see that, you and I are the witnesses, right? In Acts chapter number 1 verse number 8. So there's a field, the field is the world, it's ripe unto harvest.

We're the witnesses to go out there to the field to do it. So we begin to see that. But as you break it down even a little bit farther than that, you would see that there's maybe the way to fix that problem as well as the problem itself in the same verse.

And that's in Matthew chapter number 9, 37, Luke chapter number 10, verse number 2. And the Bible says that the need is great and the labors are few. So we have the problem in the verse and then we have the solution in the verse.

The problem obviously is the need is great. There's a lot of big need for more churches, more sound churches in our area, more sound churches on the mission field all over.

[2:15] There's a lot of churches, but there's more need for strong churches, biblical churches. So there's the problem. But the Bible says the solution is the labors.

And so that's kind of what we're going to be dealing with this afternoon as we discuss these involving people in the church. Now obviously let me say this. We can all agree with the problem is the need, the lack of labors.

The Lord tells us that the labors will get it done. But think about this for a minute. We can't force anybody to do anything, right? It's awful neat and awful interesting that we say so-and-so needs to do that and someone should do that.

But not anybody is going to do what they should do. In fact, think about this. Do you know that they say statistically that 80% or less 20% of the people in our churches do 80% of the work?

That's really true if you think about it. In our ministries, it's a few short people that are doing really good, but they get volunteered for everything, right? And hey, if you love the Lord, you're going to do this. And you like music?

[3:16] Good. You like the YouTube? Good. Because there's nobody else to do it. And so the people that are volunteers, they get to do everything. So 20% really doing 80% of the work. Now imagine if we could change that around, flip the other side of the coin, if we can get 80% of our church people to be working.

Can you imagine that? I mean, we'd have, maybe things would work much faster. Maybe we can get more churches planted. Maybe more people can be given to missions. More people would be giving. More people would be witnessing. I mean, a lot more stuff can be done.

But instead of just talking theoretically about it, I want to get it down to a few different things to show us how to do that. But before I show you some different steps, maybe some different Bible principles, how we could do that, we have to understand exactly what the problem is.

So we see that big need, obviously the big need of the world needed to be churches. The problem, obviously, is the labors. And so we want to discuss that problem that we need more labors.

Now think another step with me. I heard when I was younger a statement, you've probably heard this too, that you can lead a horse to water, but you can't force them to drink, right? And it's true, because when we started in Argentina, we really wanted people to do different things, but you can't force anybody to do anything.

And in fact, when somebody does do something and they're forced to be doing it, they really don't do it with their whole heart and it just doesn't turn out well. You end up pulling that person out and putting somebody in. But later on in life, I heard a different ending on that quote that really helped me out in my ministry.

The quote said, you can take a horse to water, but you can't force them to drink. The end of that would be, you can't force the horse to drink water, but you can't put enough salt in his grain to make him thirsty.

You know, the truth of the matter is, we have a big problem. We have a lack of labors in our churches, in our field, but what we can do is some way we can discuss and begin to think about how we can encourage and make those other people in our churches thirsty.

So they begin to get on board. So we can say, and pull up the high spiritual peer pressure so that other people want to begin to begin serving the Lord. So that's the topic of our discussion.

Now, it's probably pretty simple and there's a couple of maybe things that I need to say, maybe a couple clarity statements. Sometimes we think when people get involved in the ministry, that means preachers.

[5:36] And I'm not talking about just preachers. Obviously, we know our churches, if our churches are going to be healthy and happy and strong, obviously they have to have good lay people. Our churches are built up of great men and great families and great people and a great youth.

So I'm not talking about, when I say getting people involved, I'm not talking about just getting preachers. Although we need preachers, I'm not talking about just them. Because that's the nucleus that's going to build the church and strengthen and get the church healthy.

And we can start all these different churches and the Lord can use that. So we're talking about involving more people. And even out of those lay people, we could say, many of them will actually go up another level and grow.

So they'll desire to be involved in different ministries and even go farther and be pastors. So that would be a clarity statement. But let's go back to the main idea. And the main focus would be, how can we get other people involved?

So my desire this afternoon is to maybe give you a couple tools, very simple. And something that everybody knows, and you probably would say that, you know, that's too simple. And it really is.

[6:36] But some simple steps and some simple tools to maybe help each and every one of us to strengthen our churches, to involve more people in our ministries so that we can actually do more for the Lord.

So let's begin there. And number one, that you have the lesson. Number one, put love. The word love. So the first thing that you and I must learn to do is love them.

Love the people that God has put in our flock. Love the people that God's put in our mission field or in our church or wherever we're at. And although that sounds very simple and we can all say, you know, I remember one time I was having a very difficult situation in Argentina.

And I called Brother Austin and I said, Jefe, I'm not sure what to do right now. And, you know, I really, my honest attitude at that moment was, you know, who gives a rip?

You all take the church. I'm leaving. I'll start another church. We did it the first time. You guys can do whatever you want. And I was mad. I mean, because these guys, they were making things difficult for me. And so I said, you know what? I'm out of here.

[7:36] And Jefe had the, I told people this in our church. He had the goal, if I can say. He said, you know what? There's an easy way to do it. You wouldn't even have to deal with him. And I said, praise the Lord.

And he said, just get out of the ministry. And I said, what did you just say? And he said, if you don't want the people problem, just get out of the ministry. I said, yeah, I'm on the border of not liking you. I mean, how can you say that? And so what he was saying is something we all know.

But if you want to be involved in the ministry, the most difficult part in the ministry is dealing with people. There's people that are always mad and always sad and always causing problems, always asking questions and always crying about something and always high maintenance and all these different people.

Man, those people just agree. I love the people that just come in. They're always excited and wanting to serve the Lord. But we don't have as many of those people that I would like to have in our church. And so if we want to help them and actually get them on board, we actually need to learn to love those people.

And loving those people, we can talk about it in many different ways. We all know the verses of John chapter number 15, verse number 12, 1 John chapter number 4, verse number 7 to 8, 1 John chapter number 4, verse number 20, verse number 21. We all know these verses about how we're supposed to love people.

[8:43] But really, we're supposed to just simply love the people. And can I tell you this? Everybody wants to be loved. And if we do not love the people, they will find another church that does love them. And sadly, many times it's the cults or the other groups.

A while back, we lost a girl out of our church, and she had a lot of migraines. And she was one of those high maintenance people. And we tried to help her and try to encourage her. But one day, she hadn't been coming for weeks.

And so we meet on once a week with some of the guys. And I said, let's find out what's going on. And so we contacted her. And listen to what she said. She's now going to a charismatic church.

And she said, well, I'm going to this church now because I found out they're going to pray for the sick. I thought, man, we pray for you. Hey, we're going to help you out. But she found this group that was going to show her a little bit more love.

You know what? All these Joel Osteen and all these other things, all they do is they're real lovey-dovey. But you know what? They're getting a lot of our people. And if we want to get them on board, listen, half of getting them on board, we just have to show them a little bit of love.

[9:43] And when we show them that love and we help them in certain ways, we can actually get them on board. Let's go to number two real quick. Encourage them. We've got to love them, but then we've got to encourage them. Not too long ago, I read a couple of different books that really helped me as a dad.

One of those books was called Strong Father, Strong Daughters. Great book. Another book was called Raising Daughters by James Thompson. Now I'm having a boy. I have to read the other one. But it's called Raising Daughters by James Thompson.

Really good. Both these books. Here's the gist of the whole books. Both of them had the idea of when fathers have a part in their daughter's life and encourage them and love them in the right way, statistically speaking, in their large study, Focus of the Family and all these different ones, statistically speaking, less of them, when their fathers are involved in their lives, statistically speaking, less of the daughters will have this premarital sex and get involved in drugs and get involved in liquor.

It had all these different things. And one of them, this one book, Strong Father, Strong Daughters, it's a secular book. I don't even think she's Christian. She's talking from a secular viewpoint. The whole point is that we could have strong children by encouraging our children.

And that helped me out a lot as a dad. And we can encourage a lot. But listen to this. As we talk about helping our children, can I tell you it works exactly the same way in our churches and in our ministries.

[11:06] When we encourage people, it actually grows them. It actually helps them. And listen, a lot more people we found out will actually get on board and want to be involved in the churches just because we encourage them in the right way.

Paul encouraged the people. He wrote specific letters to them, right, to Timothy and to Titus. And he even wrote letters about them. At the end of almost all of his epistles, he said, oh, and Titus says hi, and Philemon says hi, and Sylvania says hi.

I mean, why in the world do you mention all these guys? Maybe so those guys think, yeah, I'm one of them. I mean, it was encouraging. He defended them. I mean, we can say all these different things how Paul did for them.

But you know what? Listen, when you and I... Hey, guys, this is really simple. It may be too simple for what we're talking about because we're in church planning. But I was given this topic and involving people.

And you know what? The Lord's used this in our life. In fact, one of our pastors, Jorge, he gives the testimony. I remember it a couple times, but I don't remember that much. He tells people now, he says, yeah, pastor never...

[12:10] He calls me pastor and he says, pastor never let me go. He always would come by my work. He was a construction worker. And so every once in a while on his work break, I would stop by there just to say hi and kind of put in a little bit of that time.

You know what? Now he says that that was such a big part of him being in the ministry. Well, I don't know if it really was, but it was enough encouragement for him to be in the Lord's service. And now he's a pastor.

The Lord used that. And you and I can encourage people. Listen, I mean, we have text and email and writing a letter to somebody and talking to somebody, give them a phone call, whatever it may be.

But you know what? Just as those books said, when fathers get involved in their children's lives, things drastically change. They're happier and they're healthier. And when we get involved in our ministries, they're happier, healthier, and stronger.

And more people seem to get on board and to begin to get involved in the ministry. I mean, who wants to, you know, who doesn't want to be involved? When you never get to talk to the big guy, we've all seen the ministries that the pastor comes in.

[13:14] He preaches and he goes out the same door. But you know what? When that pastor lives amongst them and when that man of God that they say, boy, he's a big man of God or something.

When he lives amongst him, boy, he really changes things. Just encouraging our people. Just loving them because God put them in our flock. Go to number three very quickly. Allow me to say this before I do.

Y'all have probably heard the statement. Spurgeon said you can attract more flies by honey rather than vinegar. It sounds better in Spanish because it says miel and miel.

So it rhymes. It's a little bit better. I think Charles Spurgeon used to speak Spanish or something. It was really good. But listen, here's the idea. Something sweet can attract a lot more than something bitter. And, you know, I've set the people down and I've tried to be, you know, show them that I'm the authority.

And, boy, I gave it to them. Some people didn't come back. I was like, man. So then I had to go try to work at it. And, you know, when I found out the same way that you can say some things to a person in an encouraging, enlightening way and they'll actually do it.

[14:26] But when you yell at them, they'll actually get discouraged about it. I mean, everybody's different, obviously. But you ever seen your dog? I'm not an animal lover. We have a dog. And, actually, we just got rid of him before we left Argentina, thank the Lord.

And, you know, that dog would come up and he would jump on me. And I hated the thing because he would always jump on me and put his paws on me. And I thought, stupid dog, get off. And I couldn't teach a dog to stop jumping on me. So sometimes I'd look at him.

You know, he could be standing back there or he could be jumping up. You all know how it works. But you can look at the dog and say, I hate your gut, you stupid little dog. I want to kill you so bad. I mean, he's so happy.

He doesn't even realize what you're saying. But, you know what, in the same way, you know, without speaking bad, in the ministry, you can really push somebody really hard. But in the right kind of way and encouraging them, they'll be stronger, healthier, happier.

And they'll actually do what they're supposed to do. They'll actually get on board and begin to get involved. Number three, believe in them. This is something that would be very personal to me.

[15:26] And I believe has helped out a lot of us and maybe even in a lot of our people that have been involved in our ministries. Believe in people. Let me say this.

Believe in people. Maybe trust people, we could say. But in other words, you know what? Where there's no trust, there's no good relationship. How about this? Have you ever seen a marriage that works really good when the husband doesn't trust in the wife or the wife doesn't trust in the husband?

We're on the radio now, so we get a lot of couples come because we preach or teach on marriage a lot. And we get a lot of people come, and she does not trust him at all when he's off work.

He doesn't trust her and vice versa. But, you know, Proverbs 31, verse number 11 says, the virtuous woman, the heart of her husband, doth trust in her. And when there's trust, listen, it works for marriage, but it also works for ministry.

And when somebody trusts in you, knows you trust in them, knows you believe in them, boy, that'll rank it up, and that'll help them go a little bit farther. And believing in somebody, what am I talking about believing?

[16:30] I'm not saying don't believe in God, just believe in them. Obviously, we know better than that. But I am saying, listen, believe in them just like we would believe in ourself.

Because a lot of times, the Lord's put us where the Lord's put us, and then we begin to think, or maybe me, I begin to think, well, the Lord's put me up here, the Lord's given me experience that they don't have.

But you know what, if I can believe in them, they also can be used of God. They also can do wonderful things. I've heard fellow missionaries that have said you can never trust in a person from that certain country.

And you know what, it really destroyed. I mean, although he never, he says it to fellow missionaries, Americans, he doesn't say it to the people that I know of, the people in his country. But listen, you know, although he never says it, just the idea, it's something about like the spirit of the whole thing.

Like when you walk in a house and you know somebody's upset all the day and tell you they're upset, they can kind of feel that. Listen, when you don't believe in somebody, they'll know that. So we have to learn to believe in them and trust them.

[17:35] Listen, I mean, there's no national boundaries here. God can use them to preach just as much as he can use me to preach. In fact, I used to play basketball. And when you play basketball, you play as a team.

Everybody passes. I mean, even when you're up at the goal, sometimes you pass it back to the other guy or you give the assist. And almost assist is just as good as anything else. And it doesn't really matter. But listen, when there's a ball hog, the whole team hates them.

And you know what, it seems when it's a ministry, although we might think it's different, it's exactly the same thing. Nobody likes a ball hog. And when we begin to let people do other things that maybe we can do, but we believe in them and let them do it, you know what, their encouragement builds up.

They want to be involved. They're on the team. And allow me to say, many of the wins that we have, it's actually because of them, not because of us. Because now we're playing like a team. And when people say, and I get nervous when people say, well, how many churches did you start, brother?

Well, I had a part of starting two churches personally, but the last two churches that were started, I didn't start them. The guys out of the Bible college started them. And I'm willing to help them and we're doing, I mean, the Lord's using us together, but they're actually the ones doing it.

[18:47] I'm not doing it. And you know what? A lot of times, boy, if they know that I believe in them, man, I'm a nobody. But if they know I believe in them, boy, you should see them stand up and preach and do everything.

I mean, they think, they are the stuff. Listen, in the ministry, when we believe in people, more people will be involved and more people will be stronger so they can go farther. Number four, very quickly.

Number four would be pray for them. Now, again, these are steps that are super simple. And these are also steps that I'm learning or have learned in my life.

Now, when my wife and I were on deputation, I don't remember where we got the idea, but we began to pray for the people in Argentina. We were on deputation in 2000 and 2001.

We began to pray for the people. God, would you prepare the people of Argentina wherever we're going to go? We didn't know the city or the exact location. God, would you prepare the people? Would you do something special?

[19:43] And we prayed and we prayed and we prayed. God, prepare the people. God, prepare the people. God, prepare the people. In 2004, after we finished in Peru, in 2004, we arrived to Argentina. We arrived in January of 2004.

And when we arrived to Argentina, our prayer began to change. And we began to say, God, we've been praying that you would prepare the people. God, would you send those people that you prepared? And you could think whatever you want to think.

But you know what? Little by little. I mean, we had our part. We tried to go out and get them. But the Lord began to send us young men, young ladies, young families. The Lord began to send people to our church. And I believe it was a direct answer to our prayers.

I believe the Lord began to see. And a lot of times when we've been in a down time, my wife and I begin to talk. And we say, you know what? We're kind of guilty. We haven't even really been praying that the Lord would send anybody.

James chapter number four, verse number two, on one side of the coin would say, you have not because you ask not. Right? The other side would say in Matthew chapter number seven, verse number seven, ask and you shall receive. Right? And in the ministry, we must learn to ask.

[20 : 46] Listen, not only ask, but we must learn to pray that God will send them forth and to pray that God will. Pray that God really will send them and then pray that God will be ready to receive them.

And we could talk about maybe praying for their needs and praying for their family and praying for their spiritual. And that's all important. And Paul did that. And we can see that. Very important. But I'm specifically talking pray that God will send forth labors.

If the true problem is labors, because the need is great, the labors are few. If the true problem are the labors in these churches that we need to start, then we need to pray that God will send more to us. We pray.

I do believe God will send them to it. Number five. We're on number five, right? Sorry, I got lost. Number five. Give tools to them. Give tools.

Did I skip a point there? No. Okay. Number five. Give tools to them. Now, if we expect them to grow, to be involved, obviously, very simple.

[21:42] We need to give them the tools to do so. I once read exhortation without explanation equals frustration. Boy, I've told a lot.

I've been very guilty on telling people, do this and do this and don't do this. And I didn't show them how. And Brother Austin taught me, really, everybody who is truly saved wants to serve God.

They just need to know why and how. With my preaching, I can tell them why. But I need to show them how. And those tools can be tools that I can show them how to witness and show them how to give and show them how to live and show them how to do what they're supposed to do.

If I put them, so to say, in the youth ministry, I need to maybe give them some lessons and show them how to do it. Not just say, well, God helped me do it when I was younger.

You can do it, too. That could frustrate somebody and pull them down. But we want to get more people involved, so we need to give out more tools and help them do so. Let's jump to the next one. We can say that a plumber, you know, who's expected to fix the pipes and doesn't have the appropriate tools.

[22:47] And the carpenter who's supposed to make some beautiful furniture and doesn't have the appropriate tools, obviously it won't work out. And you and I and the ministry wanting to get other people involved, if we don't give them the right tools, obviously they're not going to be able to do it.

They're going to get frustrated and discouraged and they're going to leave. Number six, be growing myself. So just for a moment, we'll step on what Brother Chris said, which was wonderful.

And I hope you were listening. This would be on the personal basis. You and I must love them and pray for them and help them and encourage them. All these different things. But listen, on the outside, we're also supposed to be growing ourselves.

Because we all know that what we do not know or what we do not have, we cannot pass to another person. And if it's real truly, if it is true, the Lord said, if it's really true that the student will not outgrow the teacher, if that's really true, I mean, that puts a lot of responsibility on me.

Because that means, listen to this, that means if I'm, instead of being here, if I'm here, and the guys that are learning are not going to make it to where I'm at, that means they're right here.

[23:59] That means their disciples are right here. So are we breaking it down? You know, I have to be growing myself. And let me, we can say a couple different things here. And I want to even give you maybe a couple ideas how we can grow.

But we all must obviously be walking with the Lord. We must be loving our wives. We must be loving our families. We must be living and serving the Lord as we should. And a couple different ways that we can grow. One would be striving to read our Bible through multiple times a year, finding a mentor, reading good books, continue working hard on getting, gaining experience and insight, doing different things.

And you all must remember that, you know what? Let me say this. A good critic, anybody can be a good critic on the sideline. But can I tell you, there's nobody on the sideline that has ever won a game.

So you and I, in other words, if we're going to be in there, we must be growing ourself. Or soon we will be sitting on the sideline. Number seven, very last one. Realize that it's all God and not you.

Now I'm not, I want to be very careful and I want to say this. Obviously, we don't want to go to one stream, one extreme or the other. We don't want to go to the extreme of, hey man, sit down, cross your hands, don't worry about it.

[25:14] The Lord's going to take it, just pray for it. I mean, that would be as dumb as maybe the farmer who says, Lord, I'm praying you'll send rain. And he doesn't even put down the seed because he just, you know, expects the Lord to do it.

And then the Lord does send rain and then it doesn't grow because he was the ignorant person who didn't put down the seed, right? I mean, that's a very obvious thing. But what I am saying, we are to work harder, longer, more hours, smarter in any other way than other people.

But at the same time, we must realize if the Lord's not in it, it's not going anywhere. I like to read biographies.

Some of my favorite books are biographies. And I like to read about Hudson Taylor and about William Carey and about Jim Elliott and about all these. I like to read biographies. It's really encouraging to me personally to be able to be encouraged to help other people.

And I really love biographies. But you know what? For a long time, it took me a long time. And I'm probably still learning some, but I learned that all of these men had a common denominator.

[26:19] And although for a long time, maybe I used to, this person, this is the way he did it. And this person, this is the way he did it. And maybe try to copy the mannerisms or the habits or whatever. You know, the common denominator, some of these guys were country people.

And some of these guys were city people. And some of these, of all these different biographies. But all of them had the same common denominator that they were all controlled and led by the Holy Spirit.

And if we want to see more churches started, and we want to even see more people involved in our ministry so that more things can be done, we all must realize, you know, work as hard as you can.

Do as much as you can. I mean, do everything in your might. But realize when the blessing does come, don't take the credit. It belongs to the Lord. Because you remember old Herodias, I think his name was.

Herodias was sitting down there in the chair. And when he was sitting in the chair, then they walked by and he said, oh, voice of God. And he said, yeah, well, I am the man. He fell down backwards, got eaten by the worms.

[27:23] Nebuchadnezzar, he's walking through the palace. And he said, and Danny's walking through the palace. He said, boy, look at what I have done here. And right away, the Lord, at the same moment, the Lord took him out. He was in the field. He had hair as like an eagle.

He had claws way down. And he began to eat grass. And when he recognized what the Lord done, he was put back in. We can go over story over story. But when they stole the Lord's credit, the Lord said, hmm.

So we have to love them. We have to help them. We have to encourage them. We have to do it. We have to be growing. We have to do all these different things to help. And more people get involved.

But when they do get involved, don't forget, we have to learn to be humble. And I'm going to say this. The more the Lord does in your life, the more humble we need to be.

And the Lord uses that. I mean, he resists the prideful. And he gives grace to the humble. And so you and I must realize it's all of the Lord. It's what he wants.

[28:22] Without taking time, 1 Corinthians 15, verse number 10. By the grace of God, I am what I am. But I've labored more abundantly above all of them. But by the grace of God, I am what I am. So it's all God in it.

But don't forget, in that little bitty section over there, Paul's saying, man, when those guys were asleep, I was working. When those guys were saying, these people can't do anything, I was working with them. When those guys said, man, these bunch of people don't even care about anything, I was loving them and encouraging them and helping them.

When nobody else wanted to do it, man, we started our second one, third one, fourth one. When nobody else, we were going at it. But let me say, it was all the Lord. It wasn't because of me. So Christians, I believe with all my heart, if our problem, we go back to the large spectrum.

If the great problem, the need is to plant churches, but our churches are filled with people, not just preachers. In order to have happy and healthy churches, we have to have strong families, strong people.

And when the problem is 20% of the people doing 80% of the work, if we could switch that and we can begin to have 80% of the people doing the work in some way and involving more people, boy, things could really get done.

[29:32] So in order to get people involved, we must love them, encourage them, help them. So simple, but yet something that needs to be practiced in our life.

Father, I thank you for your goodness, for your love. Thank you for allowing us to have this time together. Lord, I pray that you bless every ministry that's being represented here.

Thank you, Lord, for Brother Austin. Lord, thank you for Brother Jessup. Thank you, Lord, for your goodness, your kindness. Lord, thank you for what we've heard thus far. And, Lord, I ask that you would bless. Lord, help it not to go past us.

Help us to listen, to think about it, to meditate upon it, Lord, and to see what we can do to grow farther and better and stronger in our lives so that we can do more for you. Thank you, Lord. In Jesus' name we pray.

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