



## LEADERS, LET CHURCHES MULTIPLY!

George Patterson, 10 July 2014

I am talking to Christian leaders whose decisions affect the fruitfulness of many workers. Conclusive evidence is pouring in from many fields that where workers heed certain New Testament guidelines, churches multiply rapidly where God has prepared the people. This is today's challenge to visionary leaders.

Has God placed you where, as a leader, you will decide between mediocrity and a vigorous church planting movement? Maybe God has, and you don't know it. Perhaps you've thought that a healthy movement requires money, high degrees, big meetings or forcing older churches to change. Not so! I will say in the next three minutes how you can see churches multiply in a healthy, vigorous movement.

First, discern fields that God has ripened for harvest, as Jesus said. Stop trying to push camels through the needle's eye, wasting time with folk who are content with what they have. I had to shake the dust from my feet, as Jesus said, to leave communities that rejected Jesus.

Second, start the kind of churches that multiply readily. Here's how. Some believers yearn to do more for Jesus but find no vital positions open in their church; release them to launch a 2<sup>nd</sup> track, like Peter started, in Cornelius' home. In a 2<sup>nd</sup> track...

- Prolific churches would retain your organization's doctrine and identity, but require only those activities that Jesus and his apostles required.
- Workers and congregations follow New Testament guidelines for church life, obeying the explicit commands of Christ before all else.
- Believers reach friends for Jesus, meeting in their homes, as in the New Testament era.
- Church planters keep things simple; church plants are rarely budgeted, because tiny, healthy flocks keep multiplying in the normal New Testament way, steadily, not just a temporary revival.
- Leaders keep gatherings small, as Moses required of Israel's shepherding elders, to sustain the intense interaction demanded by the New Testament. All believers serve one another with their different spiritual gifts, not just teaching, and unpaid volunteers do most of the work.
- Shepherds mentor newer shepherds, training them as Jesus and his apostles did.
- Pastoral trainers choose training curriculum that fits their people's background.

The difficulty for most leaders to launch a 2<sup>nd</sup> track is what we must repent of. I had to repent of positioning myself in power at others' expense, and resisting needed change for fear of discord. Fear of friction stifles initiative and is futile, as no significant advance in Christ's kingdom has ever come about without painful conflict. Every leader I've mentored who has started a significant movement has endured criticism from others who failed to see such fruit.

Some leaders must repent of excessive marketing of services or products, and simply do what multiplies churches.

Other leaders must cease excusing failure by saying that churches that multiply rapidly are always doctrinally weak. Some are, while in infancy, as are conventional churches in pioneer fields that have new believers and new leaders. But house churches grow rapidly in Christ, if leaders mentor newer leaders as Paul did, so that the training moves along with the cutting edge of the movement.

Do you want to discuss possibilities? Let me put you in touch with others with a background similar to yours, who are eager to chat about these things. Write to me at [www.yesnet.pw](http://www.yesnet.pw)