A MADE FOR MORE RESOURCE

A MISSIONAL APPROACH TO THE MARKETPLACE

AN ONRAMP TO ENTREPRENEURIAL CHURCH PLANTING

W. JAY MOON

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Introduction

"The long established ways of doing church are working less and less." —former Anglican Bishop Graham Cray, 2017.

"Forty-eight percent of millennials now consider themselves to be post-Christian," —researcher and author Dave Kinnaman, 2014.

"The secularizing West is one of the fastest-growing mission fields," —Asbury Theological Seminary President Dr. Timothy Tennent.

These statements are telling. And they echo what I'm hearing as I regularly meet with church planters. These leaders are optimistic and enthusiastic about reaching this large mission field with this rapidly growing concept of entrepreneurial church planting (ECP). Many of these planters are launching or are about to experiment with innovative approaches to plant churches that engage the marketplace—while applying missional perspectives. This e-Book explores how entrepreneurs are identifying locations that are often frequented in the marketplace as successful venues for church plants.

In this introductory look at ECP, we'll consider some of the biblical, theological, and historical foundations of this kind of church

planting and look at contemporary examples of ECP applications, as well as specific and practical steps to help you get started. My goal is to encourage church planters like you to explore creative church-planting approaches by engaging your faith in the marketplace. Because the Kingdom needs leaders like you who are willing to risk and venture out and bring Jesus to millennials and emerging generations who have little chance of meeting Him otherwise. I love what Asbury Theological Seminary is doing to back this effort by encouraging innovative church plants with partial sponsorship and training. My role as an Asbury Seminary professor, ECP church planter, and entrepreneur provides a unique vantage point for this movement. You could say I'm immersed in it.

I'm convinced the best is yet to come. The energy rising up from ECP planters continues to build as the church is no longer confined to a building where worshippers gather only once or twice a week. Instead, the Church is coming alive throughout neighborhoods as people come to faith in marketplace venues. I hope this eBook stimulates you to experiment further to reach every neighborhood in America, including yours.

You can learn more about entrepreneurial church planting by contacting me at jay.moon@asburyseminary.edu

CHAPTER 1

What is Entrepreneurial Church Planting?[1]

Welcome to life on the fastest-growing mission field in the world: North America." In 2016, Asbury Theological Seminary President Timothy C. Tennent proclaimed this greeting to incoming seminary students.[2]

In it, he recognized that the church can no longer do the proverbial "business as usual" as we move forward in the twenty-first century. While previous generations thought of the church as a benevolent organization in the center of culture (like a chaplain of society), the Western church now finds itself marginalized and losing its public voice in the wider culture. We can look at the widely documented decreasing attendance of U.S. churches as one indication of this waning influence.

[1] Portions of this chapter were first published in the following: W. Jay Moon, "Entrepreneurial Church Planting." *Great Commission Research Journal* 9.1 (2017): 56-70.

[2] Timothy C. Tennent, "Homiletical Theology" (opening convocation address, Asbury Theological Seminary, September 2016), http://timothytennent.com/2016/09/13/my-2016-opening-convocation-address-homiletical-theology/.

That's why I'm so encouraged by what I'm seeing in entrepreneurial church planters (and why I'm writing this ebook). These missional entrepreneurs are creatively entering this mission field that Tennent identified by engaging and gathering communities of faith in the marketplace. They are leveraging the networking and value creation they've seen businesses master to form communities of Christ followers among unchurched people. In this chapter, we'll look at why we desperately need entrepreneurial church planting and some guiding questions to help you engage a new generation in the marketplace.

Post-Christian Reality

It's not hard to see that the church in North America is losing its overall influence in society. I don't think anyone would really argue that. Researcher and author David Kinnaman estimates that 38 percent of people living in the continental U.S. are actually "post-Christian" and "essentially secular in belief and practice."[3] He arrived at this number by adding the categories of "the unchurched, the never-churched and the skeptics" to those who report no religious affiliation. An even more alarming trend is that the younger the generation is, the more post-Christian it is (see Figure 1 and Table 1 below):[4]

[3] Cathy Lynn Grossman, "Secularism Grows as More U.S. Christians Turn 'Churchless,'" Religion News Service, October 24, 2014, http://religionnews.com/2014/10/24/secularism-is-on-the-rise-as-more-u-s-christians-turn-churchless/.

[4] Ibid.

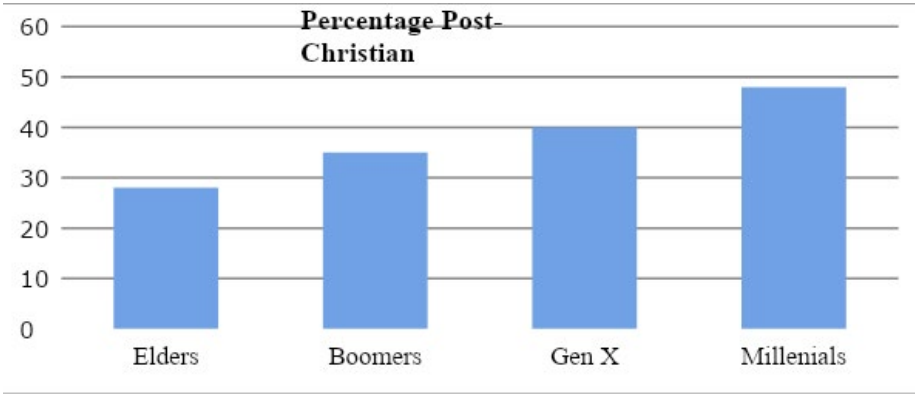


Figure 1. Percentage Post-Christian vs. Four Generations

Generation	Born Between	Percentage Post-Christian
Millennials	1984 and 2002	48 percent
Gen Xers	1965 and 1983	40 percent
Boomers	1946 and 1964	35 percent
Elders	Earlier than 1945	28 percent

Table 1. Percentage Post-Christian and Four Generations Defined

This trend is even more alarming when you consider the plight of many Western European nations where church attendance has dropped to dismal levels. Is the fate of the church in North America destined to follow the secularization slide of the U.K.? To explore answers to this question, entrepreneurial church planters are first asking more fundamental questions to guide them to innovative solutions.

Guiding Questions

In the past, churches would often respond to decreasing church attendance by focusing on better preaching, better facilities and more programs. While these have been good and necessary improvements, entrepreneurial church planters wrestle with a larger and more fundamental question: "If large segments of the population (such as millennials) will not come to the existing churches—no matter how excellent the preaching, building, or programs are—then what entrepreneurial approaches can be used to reach them?"

In other words, the church cannot assume the post-Christian population will enter its traditional church buildings. As a result, the church needs to consider creative venues outside the normal walls of traditional church buildings. Perhaps churches have been planted in venues that are too limited in their ability to connect with people in their daily patterns of life and work. Let me explain.

Picture a bonsai tree. The treetop only rises knee-high, limiting the tree's effectiveness and reach. For example, full-grown trees provide shade from the hot sun. People gather under their branches for picnics and even worship services in some parts of the world like West Africa. You get the picture. Because of its limited root system, a bonsai tree can't provide shelter or facilitate community. Its small size comes from its small container, which stifles the roots and restricts its growth to a fraction of its normal size.

Is it possible that church planters are planting churches in containers that restrict instead of facilitate growth? Perhaps we're limiting the effectiveness of churches by limiting the locations

where they're planted. **So many times, we plant churches in separate buildings that are disengaged from the daily patterns of life and work.** Since the Industrial Revolution, separate spaces have been designated for home, work and worship. For someone to come worship with a church, they would have to intentionally leave work and home activities and enter a separate building once or twice a week. Is this restricted venue unintentionally stifling the (out)reach of the church?[5]

This leads to the second question that entrepreneurial church planters ask: "Where are these unchurched people already gathering in the marketplace, or what type of business ventures would draw them?"

Entrepreneurial church planters attempt to break out of restricted containers by planting churches in the marketplace to engage those who are outside the church. For example, instead of asking millennials to leave their normal gathering locations (coffee shops, cafes, malls, movie theaters, gyms, etc.), why not plant churches in these very venues? If these businesses don't exist in your community, why not start a business that also serves as a venue for a church plant? Entrepreneurs recognize the capacity of business to develop networks through their value proposition; church planters leverage this capacity to locate churches inside these businesses.

After considering the first two questions, the third question readily follows: "How can entrepreneurs form communities of Christ

[5] A similar argument is made in: Ken Hemphill and Kenneth Priest, *Bonsai Theory of Church Growth*, Revised and Expanded ed. (Tigerville, SC: Auxano Press, 2011).

followers in the marketplace through Christ-honoring business ventures?"

Definition of Entrepreneurial Church Planting

Now that you know the need, let's define what entrepreneurial church planting (ECP) is, taking into consideration these three guiding questions. **Entrepreneurial church planting (ECP) is defined as *innovative approaches to form communities of Christ followers among unchurched people through businesses in the marketplace.*** ECP addresses the need to engage public society through the marketplace via entrepreneurial means. These kinds of church planters either start new businesses or work within existing businesses to plant churches in business venues. While many traditional church planters may be reluctant to combine entrepreneurship and church planting, entrepreneurial church planters are eager to combine the two and leverage the synergy gained by joining forces.[6]

The marketplace is used as a broad term to describe the network of relationships whereby people exchange value with one another. Sounds complex, but it isn't. For example, businesses often have vast networks of relationships that form as a result of their connections to people. These connections supply them materials and services (supply chains) and relationships to others who distribute and sell their products and services (distribution outlets). Instead of thinking of these networks as simply secular, entrepreneurial church planters see these relationships as fertile soil for church planting.

[6] I still affirm the value and need for traditional approaches to church planting. This is a "both/and" instead of an "either/or" in order to reach various groups of people.

This is not necessarily easy work, but it is missional and vital from the perspective of the *missio Dei*. The need for ECP, then, is rooted directly in the mission of God to redeem humanity. Although this book describes several contemporary examples, the necessity and practice of ECP is firmly rooted in biblical soil—as you'll see in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

Foundations of Entrepreneurial Church Planting

Some outside observers may accuse ECP planters of simply following the latest fad that looks attractive today but will fade out of sight tomorrow. A deeper look into the roots of ECP, however, reveals that this type of church multiplication really isn't a new fad at all. Actually, there are solid biblical, theological, and historical foundations for ECP that are seen throughout Scripture but especially with the Apostle Paul. In this chapter, we'll explore these 2,000-year-old roots and look at how he approached the ECP concept.

The Biblical Soil for ECP

In contemporary North American culture, the traditional church has found it challenging to penetrate the marketplace. Listen to what author Michael Moynagh says, "It is not easy for the church to form Christian lives in work, volunteering and leisure when the formation takes place some distance away. The teaching of practices

at church may have a level of generality that fails to engage with the specifics of a person's life."[7]

Yet, there are biblical examples of church plants amidst this network of relationships (where people spend the majority of their waking moments) called the marketplace. Let's look at Corinth.

The political and economic center of Greece, Corinth was the transit point for all maritime trade between Rome and the prosperous Roman province of Asia.[8] There, the Apostle Paul, church planter extraordinaire, worked alongside Priscilla and Aquila as a tentmaker. Although the details of this tent-making business venture are not clear, New Testament scholar Craig S. Keener gives us some idea. He notes that "multistory apartment buildings with ground-floor workshops were common; a number of urban artisans lived onsite, sometimes in a mezzanine level above their ground-floor shops … many sold from shops in their homes."[9] Keener speculates that Priscilla and Aquila may have lived on the floor above their artisan shop. Because the trade guilds were strong in Paul's day, he had access to the tent-making guild and the network of relationships connected to their business. It seems that Paul intentionally worked in the marketplace to gain access to business networks for church planting.

[7] Michael Moynagh and Philip Harrold, *Church for Every Context: An Introduction to Theology and Practice* (London: SCM, 2012), 3885–6 Kindle.

[8] Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 379.

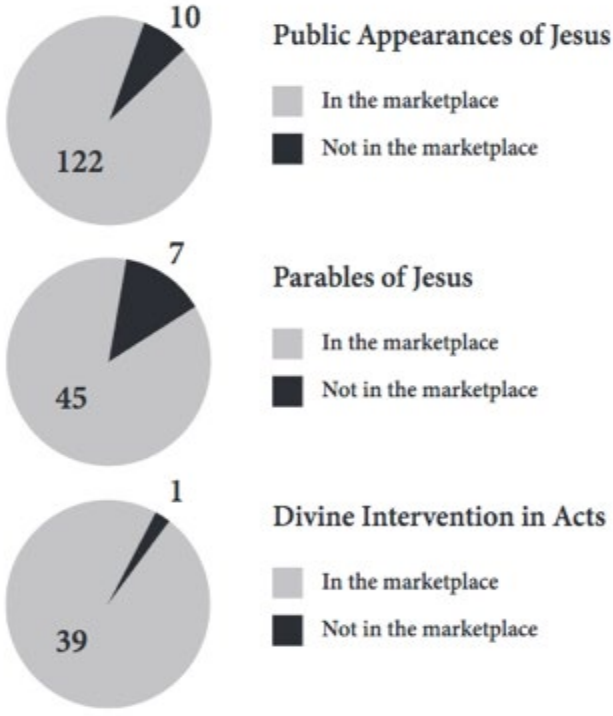
[9] Ibid.

While this business concept is often used to support the Business as Mission movement, what is less discussed is the church plant that resulted from this business activity. In Romans 16:3-5 and 1 Corinthians 16:19, we discover that a church met at Priscilla and Aquila's home, which was likely connected to their business. Paul praised Priscilla and Aquila: "They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful for them" (Rom. 16:4). Certainly, these entrepreneurial church planters were significant in Paul's mind.

But Priscilla and Aquila's contributions as entrepreneurs weren't isolated incidents. Earlier when Paul traveled to Philippi, Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14), responded to Paul's message. She and her whole household were baptized. Then Lydia invited Paul and his companions to her home (Acts 16:15). If we consider again that her home and business place were likely connected, then Paul was actually visiting her business venue for an extended time of teaching and ministry. He again meets this gathering of believers at Lydia's home/business to encourage them, prior to traveling on to Thessalonica (Acts 16:40). I'm just speculating here, but it may be that Paul "stumbled" upon this ECP approach in Lydia's business and later intentionally used it in Priscilla's and Aquila's business. He had certainly seen it before.

And he had also been told about and even "studied" it—under Barnabas and others. After his Damascus Road encounter and conversion, these disciples showed and taught Paul about their experience with Jesus and the way He lived and did ministry. Paul likely heard about how Jesus engaged marketplace topics and often visited the marketplace. Like Jesus' ministry, most of the divine

interventions in the Book of Acts appeared in the marketplace. (See Figure 2 below.)[10]



Source: R. Paul Stevens, "Work Matters: Lessons from Scripture," Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2012, 134.

Figure 2. Marketplace Engagement in New Testament

Far from being a side issue, author and researcher Greg Forster notes that the Bible places a great deal of importance on issues and concerns in the marketplace:

[10] R. Paul Stevens, *Work Matters: Lessons from Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 135.

> [T]he Bible speaks at length about work and economics. Our daily labor is the subject of extensive scriptural concern; passages running from Genesis 1 through Revelation 22 teach us to view our work as central to the meaning of our lives. We are taught to view our work as service to God and neighbor, to work diligently in an honest calling, and to persevere under the challenges of a fallen and broken world.[11]

Scripture regularly and often speaks about the centrality of work in our lives, yet this is not often the topic of conversation in pulpits across North America. This reality led Mark Greene, Executive Director of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, to conclude, "The 98 percent of Christians who are not in church-paid work are, on the whole, not equipped or envisioned for mission ... in 95 percent of their waking lives. What a tragic waste of human potential!"[12]

Knowing that this is a biblical call, I'm wracked with questions about the possibilities of what it would like if *all* Christians believed that it is God's plan for them to carry out their missional calling WITHIN the marketplace and not in spite of it? How could they use their gifting, networks, and resources in mission with God through the marketplace to reach unchurched people? Instead of assigning church planting solely to paid clergy, what if those skilled in entrepreneurship were awakened to use their talents for business and calling in mission as church planters within the marketplace?

[11] Greg Forster, "Introduction: What Are People Made For?," in *The Pastor's Guide to Fruitful Work and Economic Wisdom*, ed. Greg Forster and Drew Cleveland (Grand Rapids: *Made to Flourish*, 2012), 9.

[12] Ibid., 6.

Fortunately, we have historical examples grounded in missiological roots who have done exactly this.

Historical Examples

Missiologist/author Lesslie Newbigin and the ensuing missional church movement have pleaded for churches to regain their missional calling by finding their role in the *missio Dei*. Newbigin makes a strong statement: "A Christian community, which makes its own self enlargement its primary task, may be acting against God's will."[13] He then implores the church:

> "Go into every sector of public life to claim it for Christ, to unmask the illusions which have remained hidden and to expose all areas of public life to the illumination of the gospel. But that will only happen as and when local congregations renounce an introverted concern for their own life and recognize that they exist for the sake of those who are not members, as sign, instrument, and foretaste of God's redeeming grace for the whole life of society."[14]

Entrepreneurial church planters heed Newbigin's call to engage public life by using their entrepreneurial capacities in the economic sector. The resulting businesses and faithful communities of Christ followers are to be a sign, instrument, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God for the sake of those outside the walls of the existing church.

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[13] Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 135.
Ibid., 233.

[14] Ibid., 233.

In the follow-up to his seminal work, *The Divine Conspiracy*, Dallas Willard recognized the tremendous potential of engaging the business world:

> "What far too few either recognize or appreciate today are the opportunities available for spreading God's goodness, grace, and provision far and wide through the systems and distribution networks that exist as a direct result of industrial and commercial organizations and their professionals. Therefore the 'business world' is a critical aspect that cannot be overlooked and must be fully appreciated as vital in God's plan to overcome evil with good."[15]

While not being naïve about the potential for abuse in business, Willard further described the tremendous Kingdom potential through business that's conducted with integrity, honesty, and transparency:

> "[L]ocal business people may be farther ahead in the ways of the kingdom than those leading a local church. Business is an amazingly effective means of delivering God's love to the world by loving, serving, and providing for one another. God loves the world (John 3:16), and because he does, he has arranged the enterprise and organization of business as a primary moving force to demonstrate this love throughout human history. Thus, the field of business and its unique knowledge fall perfectly into what can and should be understood as an essential realm

[15] Dallas Willard and Gary Black Jr., *The Divine Conspiracy Continued: Fulfilling God's Kingdom on Earth* (New York: Harper One, 2014), 201.

> of human activity that can and must come under the influence and control of God's benevolent reign."[16]

To neglect the marketplace, then, is to neglect the reach of the *missio Dei* in a vital sector of society.

Twenty-First Century Circuit Riders?

While I could cite numerous historical examples [17] I think a few brief sketches of the Wesleyan movement demonstrate the trustworthy track record of the ECP approach.

In eighteenth-century England, John Wesley realized that there were large groups of people who were not coming to the church (this should sound familiar to contemporary readers living in contemporary Western contexts). Instead of waiting for them to come to the church building, Wesley realized he needed to go where they were already gathering. Instead of asking them to clean up and come into the church, he visited the marketplaces, brickyards, coal mines and other frequented areas on a mission to bring the gospel to those who were unchurched. Asbury Theological Seminary President Timothy Tennent describes this in some detail:

> "His [John Wesley's] favorite venue for preaching was graveyards and marketplaces … Markets were good because there was often a cross at the market. In eighteenth-century

[16] Ibid., 203.

[17] Some historical examples include: Celtic missionaries (sixth century), Benedictines (seventh century), Nestorians (seventh century), Martin Luther (sixteenth century), Matteo Ricci (seventeenth century), Moravians (eighteenth century), John Wesley (eighteenth century), Hans Nielsen Hauge (nineteenth century), to name a few.

> England, it was not unusual for a cross to be placed in the trading markets as a sign to remind people of the importance of honesty in public trade. So, Wesley could be outside in a very public place, and yet preach under a cross. … Wesley's famous line, 'All the world is my parish' is rooted in these new realities: Closed pulpits and their decision to move beyond formal parish lines to embrace a rather bold ecclesiology."[18]

Although hesitant at first, Wesley observed this practice resulted in a movement, gathering communities of Christ followers among unchurched people in the marketplace. Wesley's own business (yes, he was an ardent businessman and theologian!) earned a profit estimated at $4 million to $5 million in today's U.S. currency.[19] He realized the great good that this business profit could provide in his sermon on "The Use of Money":[20]

> "In the hands of his children, it [money] is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, raiment for the naked: It gives to the traveler and the stranger where to lay his head. By it we may

[18] Timothy C. Tennent, "Homiletical Theology" (opening convocation address, Asbury Theological Seminary, September 2016), http://timothytennent.com/2016/09/13/my-2016-opening-convocation-address-homiletical-theology/.

[19] David Wright, *How God Makes the World A Better Place: A Wesleyan Primer on Faith, Work, and Economic Transformation* (Grand Rapids: Christian's Library Press, 2012).

[20] As a businessman and theologian, Wesley was not naïve about the potential harm of wealth, as noted in other sermons (e.g., the dangers of riches). This is instructive for contemporary contexts. Wesley saw the good and bad, yet was willing to explore this potential for Kingdom benefit. Theologians I have talked with who have personally owned their own business often have a very different perspective on profit, markets, and the general potential for businesses to create flourishing societies than those who have not owned a business.

> supply the place of a husband to the widow, and of a father to the fatherless. We may be a defense for the oppressed, a means of health to the sick, of ease to them that are in pain; it may be as eyes to the blind, as feet to the lame; yea, a lifter up from the gates of death!"[21]

Reflecting on the missional significance of business and money in the marketplace, Wesley concluded in the same sermon, "It is therefore of the highest concern that all who fear God know how to employ this valuable talent; that they be instructed how it may answer these glorious ends, and in the highest degree."[22] Entrepreneurial church planters are living out their entrepreneurial gifting and missional calling in the marketplace, as Wesley suggested.

The spark generated by Wesley's entrepreneurial approach eventually spread like wildfire on the American frontier as Methodist circuit riders traveled to locations where pioneers lived and worked. Instead of waiting for pioneers to come to the existing churches, circuit riders preached at local gathering spots to form communities

[21] Wesley's sermons are available at: http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-theological-topic/. Several of his sermons dealt with topics related to money, including:

- Sermon 87 - The Danger Of Riches 1 Tim 6:9
- Sermon 112 - The Rich Man And Lazarus Luke 16:31
- Sermon 50 - The Use Of Money Luke 16:9
- Sermon 51 - The Good Steward Luke 21:2
- Sermon 108 - On Riches Matt 19:24
- Sermon 126 - On The Danger Of Increasing Riches Psalm 62:10

[22] Ibid.

of Christ followers. Historian Kenneth Kinghorn describes this activity:

> "Eighteenth-century conference minutes listed the preaching places precisely. Sites included taverns, cabins, stores, poorhouses, forts, barns, woodland clearings, and riverboats. On one occasion, a circuit rider preached in a gambling house. A layperson said, 'In Jesus' time, some made the house of God a den of thieves, but now the Methodists have changed a den of thieves into a house of God.' … By the mid-1800s, American Methodism had become by far the largest and most spiritually influential religious body in the nation."[23]

The parallels between the eighteenth-century Methodist circuit riders and twenty-first century entrepreneurial church planters are compelling. Both saw their missional calling and were willing to engage the locations where people outside the existing church were gathering. Both were pioneers, willing to take risks in the marketplace so that the church could fulfill her role as a sign, foretaste and instrument of the Kingdom of God.[24]And both recognized the potential of entrepreneurial experiments and decided to employ their talents for the Kingdom. Is it possible that entrepreneurial church planters are the twenty-first century equivalent of the eighteenth-century Methodist circuit riders with the potential to once again transform the spiritual landscape of North America?

[23] Kenneth Kinghorn, "Offer Them Christ," *The Asbury Herald* 117.1 (2007): 13.

[24] Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans), 1989

New Fruit From Old Trees

Due to the missional context the North American church now finds itself in, entrepreneurial church planters are engaging the marketplace today as a mission field. After serving the Anglican Church in the U.K. for many years, retired Bishop Graham Cray concluded, "The long established ways of doing church are working less and less."[25] As a result, he was instrumental in forming the Fresh Expressions movement in the U.K.,[26] which has spread to the U.S. and other areas.[27] He recognized that innovative approaches for church planting, including those in the marketplace, are needed to stem the decline of the church's influence in the Western world.

I recommend that church planters consider the potential of the marketplace to create large networks based upon authentic relationships through mutual exchange. But let me be clear that I'm not at all suggesting that churches should be operated as businesses; rather, businesses can be operated with a focus on church planting. Entrepreneurial church plants must have a double bottom line: missional purpose AND entrepreneurial viability. One without the other is not sufficient. If there is not a missional purpose, then entrepreneurial church plants can devolve into a business that does not seek to worship God (like Jesus condemned in John 2 when He cleansed the temple). If entrepreneurial church plants are not

[25] Personal conversation with the author and Graham Cray in York, England in January 2017.

[26] ECP is a subset of Fresh Expressions since not every Fresh Expression is engaged in the marketplace, though some are.

[27] For example, Sang Rak Joo's forthcoming dissertation research at Asbury Theological Seminary documents the increased social capital resulting from recent ECPs in South Korea.

financially viable, they won't survive to create long-term impact. By focusing on both missional purpose and entrepreneurial viability, entrepreneurial church plants may open new possibilities for church planters. Some of the possibilities include:

1. **Teams:** Unlike the common myth of a lone entrepreneur working silently in their garage, most entrepreneurs require a team. Business author Thomas Cooney noted, "It is arguable that despite the romantic notion of the entrepreneur as a lone hero, the reality is that successful entrepreneurs either built teams around them or were part of a team throughout."[28] Entrepreneurial church plants have the potential to energize and engage laity in the church who haven't understood their vital role in the Kingdom. For example, Chris Sorenson, planter of an Anglican church inside a café called the Camp House in Chattanooga, Tennessee, confided in me, "If I had to do this church plant all over again, the first person I would hire would be an accountant!"

   How many accountants in the church presently see their vital role in using their skills in the mission of God? Entrepreneurial church plants can energize the "secular professionals" in the church so that they now have a vital role in the church-planting movement.[29]

[28] Thomas M. Cooney, "Editorial: What Is an Entrepreneurial Team?," *International Small Business Journal* 23, no. 3 (2005): 226.

[29] Consider the vital fields that businesses engage that can now be energized to fulfill their missional calling, such as finance, accounting, management, marketing, to name a few.

2. **Ecclesiology:** While great gains in theology have been made throughout the history of the church, the church's very survival has required cultural adaptation.[30] If the cultural straight-jackets are laid aside and new innovations are explored in the shaping of a church, then we can start to see new possibilities for its impact. The bonsai tree can break free from the small container that limits its growth; and the same seed can be planted among less restricted locations for wider reach.

   While we have to be intentional about ensuring the church's fidelity to her identity, the mission of the church requires a deep engagement with the surrounding culture, including the vast network of relationships called the marketplace. New ecclesial forms will likely result from this type of creative and entrepreneurial thinking.

3. **Lay/Bi-vocational Ministry**: While employing full-time pastors won't likely come to an end anytime soon, entrepreneurial church plants consider the value of pastors remaining connected to their own circles of exchange in the marketplace, following the example of Paul in Corinth. For example, I think of an entrepreneurial church plant that started as a tech startup. The leaders found that the business addressed some of the most pressing needs for jobs in the city. As a result, the pastors didn't want to leave their work for full-time pastoring because their company had generated a unique circle

[30] A. F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996).

of influence and trust within their city's culture.[31] At the very least, entrepreneurial church plants allow church planters and their stakeholders to explore various questions and options for the employment and compensation of church planters.

To guide further reflection, discussion, and praxis, in the next chapter we'll look at a paradigm for the type of church planters that are ideally suited for this expression of church. My deep hope is that this type of probing will lead to further experimentation and innovation by entrepreneurial church planters worldwide.

[31] A forthcoming PhD dissertation by Samuel Lee at Asbury Theological Seminary documents this ECP. For a partial description, see: Samuel Lee, "Can We Measure the Success and Effectiveness of Entrepreneurial Church Planting?," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 40 4 (2016): 327–45.

CHAPTER 3

Characteristics of Entrepreneurial Church Planters

In this chapter, we'll explore the characteristics of entrepreneurial church (EC) planters.[32] To accurately portray these church planters who are also entrepreneurs, however, I want to first dispel some common myths about entrepreneurs, and then describe how entrepreneurs differ from others by the way they think and act.

Common Myths about Entrepreneurs

Picture an extrovert, aggressive, highly caffeinated, Type A, lone ranger, intuitive genius, and an extreme risk taker—many consider classic entrepreneurs to have these characteristics. However, data doesn't support this stereotype; rather, this idea of an entrepreneur is simply a myth. Think about Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple, a self-professed extreme introvert, and his famous comment: "I am

[32] Portions of this chapter were first published in the following: W. Jay Moon, "Entrepreneurial Church Planting." *Great Commission Research Journal* 9.1 (2017): 56-70.

not the right person for social networks. I was never social in my life. I am not good at socializing in person."[33]

Wozniak is not alone in the entrepreneurship world. Think about Warren Buffett (CEO of Berkshire Hathaway), Larry Page (co-founder and CEO of Google), Mark Zuckerberg (co-founder and CEO of Facebook) and Elon Musk (CEO and product architect of Tesla Motors).[34] All are highly successful entrepreneurs and also self-proclaimed introverts.

Although researchers have attempted to identify common personality traits for entrepreneurs, recent data has led them to other conclusions. Researchers Heidi M. Neck, Christopher P. Neck, and Emma L. Murray explain: "[Over] the last couple of decades, researchers have moved away from the traits perspective in favor of how entrepreneurs think and act, and have discovered that there are patterns in how entrepreneurs think."[35] As of 2018, researchers now summarize the following truths about entrepreneurs:

1. Entrepreneurs do not have a special set of personality traits.
2. Entrepreneurship can be taught (it's a method that requires practice).
3. Entrepreneurs are not extreme risk-takers.
4. Entrepreneurs collaborate more than they compete.

[33] http://fortune.com/2017/04/21/steve-wozniak-apple-microsoft/

[34] https://www.truity.com/blog/5-super-successful-introverts-and-what-they-did-right

[35] Heidi M. Neck, Christopher P. Neck, and Emma L. Murray, *Entrepreneurship: The Practice and Mindset* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018), 9.

5. Entrepreneurs act more than they plan.
6. Entrepreneurship is a life skill.[36]

In the same way, each of these truths dispel misconceptions that people may have about EC planters. These church multipliers are not some rare, exotic breed that's qualitatively different than the rest of us "mere mortals."

Entrepreneurial Thinking and Acting

Instead of looking for EC planters with particular personality traits, we'd do better to focus our search toward the patterns of thinking and acting to discover entrepreneurial potential. In *Entrepreneurship: The Practice and Mindset,* authors Neck, Neck, and Murray write that researchers have "discovered that there are patterns in how entrepreneurs think. This means that all of us have the ability to act and think entrepreneurially with practice."[37]

Five key skills that entrepreneurs cultivate are play, experimentation, empathy, creativity and reflection.[38] Cultivating and demonstrating these skills equips people to think and act entrepreneurially. Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck[39] describes two different types of mindsets: a fixed mindset and a growth mindset. Successful entrepreneurs tend to cultivate the growth mindset. She summarizes the two mindsets:

[36] Ibid., 8.

[37] Ibid., 9.

[38] Ibid., 43.

[39] Ibid., 6.

> "In a **fixed mindset**, people perceive their talents and abilities as set traits. They believe that brains and talent alone are enough for success and go through life with the goal of looking smart all the time. They take any constructive criticism of their capabilities very personally and tend to attribute others' success to luck or some sort of unfair advantage. People with a fixed mindset will tell themselves they are no good at something to avoid challenge, failure, or looking dumb.
>
> On the other hand, in a **growth mindset**, people believe that their abilities can be developed through dedication, effort, and hard work. They think brains and talent are not the key to lifelong success, but merely the starting point. People with a growth mindset are eager to enhance their qualities through lifelong learning, training, and practice. Unlike people with fixed mindsets, they see failure as an opportunity to improve their performance, and to learn from their mistakes. Despite setbacks, they tend to persevere rather than giving up."[40]

Church Planting and Entrepreneurship

To identify entrepreneurial church planters, then, we're looking for those who have capacity for *both* church planting *and* entrepreneurship. To be clear, these terms are *not* synonymous. Author and pastor Ed Stetzer warns bi-vocational planters, "This dual calling is not for the faint of heart. The sacrifice of two jobs requires even more scrutiny to balance."[41] EC planters need to

[40] Ibid., 6.

[41] http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2017/september/bivocational-ministry-as-evangelism-opportunity.html

meet the standard requirements of both church planting and entrepreneurship.[42]

On the one hand, there are many similarities between entrepreneurs and church planters. Both entrepreneurs and church planters:

- create what is not there yet by starting with what they have at hand;
- take steps in faith (entrepreneurs call it "calculated risk");
- create value for other people;
- find opportunities and act on them (connect needs and assets);
- need finances with a regular cash flow;
- manage and organize human resources;
- are susceptible to burnout.

On the other hand, there are some major differences between church planters and entrepreneurs. For example, church planters:

- depend upon the work of Holy Spirit, not simply a business plan. This requires spiritual insight that's not gained through pro forma financial projections alone.
- aim to transform the worldview of others, not simply cater to their needs and desires. Success, then, includes attending to

[42] There are several resources available that summarize the characteristics of church planters, including Winfield Bevins, *Church-Planting Revolution: A Guidebook for Explorers, Planters, and Their Teams* (Franklin, TN: Seedbed, 2017); Michael Moynagh and Philip Harrold, *Church for Every Context: An Introduction to Theology and Practice* (London: SCM, 2012); Stuart Murray, *Planting Churches in the 21st Century* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2010); Craig Ott and Gene Wilson, *Global Church Planting: Biblical Principles and Best Practices for Multiplication* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011).

spiritual and social metrics and not simply reaching a single financial bottom line.

- recognize that the customer is NOT king. The *missio Dei* motivates the church planter to reveal the Kingdom of God so that the church becomes a sign, agent, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God for the sake of the world.[43] The church, then, exists not simply to provide spiritual services that are attractive to people; rather, the church is always challenged to be on mission with God to reach the world, which includes having a prophetic voice in culture.

Entrepreneur and educator Michael Goldsby developed a paradigm to describe the characteristics of entrepreneurs.[44] After studying many entrepreneurs, Goldsby noted that entrepreneurs were different from others in the way they received new information and then acted on that information, resulting in four different types of entrepreneurs.

Prototypical EC planters

While it may seem like a tall task to find a church planter who is also an entrepreneur, we actually have several examples to guide us. In the two previous chapters, we looked at some historical precedents and biblical examples. Additionally, we have significant

[43] Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989).

[44] Michael Goldsby, *The Entrepreneur's Tool Kit,* CD, The Great Courses (Chantilly, VA: The Teaching Company, 2014).

contemporary examples worldwide in the U.K.[45] South Korea,[46] Africa,[47] Asia[48] and the U.S.[49] Although there are many examples we can study, I want to point out some case studies I've personally observed that illustrate a common paradigm for EC planters.

Based on these case studies, I modified Goldsby's model to describe EC planters in Figure 3 below. The Y-axis portrays how these EC planters receive information from the concrete (quantitative data, surveys, statistics, and demographics) to the abstract (qualitative data, preferences, feelings, attitudes, and aspirations). The X-axis describes how these EC planters act on this information from connecting (people, places, and disparate ideas) to exploring (opportunities, possibilities, and new ideas).

[45] To further read about examples of ECPs that emerge from the Fresh Expressions movement in the U.K., see http://freshexpressions.org.uk/

[46] To further read about examples of ECPs in South Korea, see the current research of Sang Rak Joo, "Entrepreneurial Church Planting (ECP) as a Model of Fresh Expressions in the South Korean Context: Case Studies Exploring Relationships Between Church Planting and Social Capital" (PhD dissertation at Asbury Theological Seminary, 2017) and Samuel Lee, "Faith in the Marketplace: Measuring the Impact of the Church in the Marketplace Through Entrepreneurial Church Planting" (PhD dissertation at Asbury Theological Seminary, scheduled for completion in 2019).

[47] E.g., Johnson Asare developed a hotel in a largely Muslim city, which also provides a venue for a church plant. See https://www.radach.org/.

[48] Consider the location of churches in shopping malls, such as in The Philippines. See http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-2914880/Eat-pray-shop-Philippines-embraces-mall-worshipping.html. Incidentally, malls in the U.S. that are finding it difficult to remain open are now opening up to churches as well. See https://www.wsj.com/articles/for-some-struggling-malls-churches-offer-second-life-1507633201.

[49] This church planting approach appears to be on the rise in the U.S., according to the Fresh Expressions U.S. director. In addition to the cases presented in this chapter, see https://freshexpressionsus.org/.

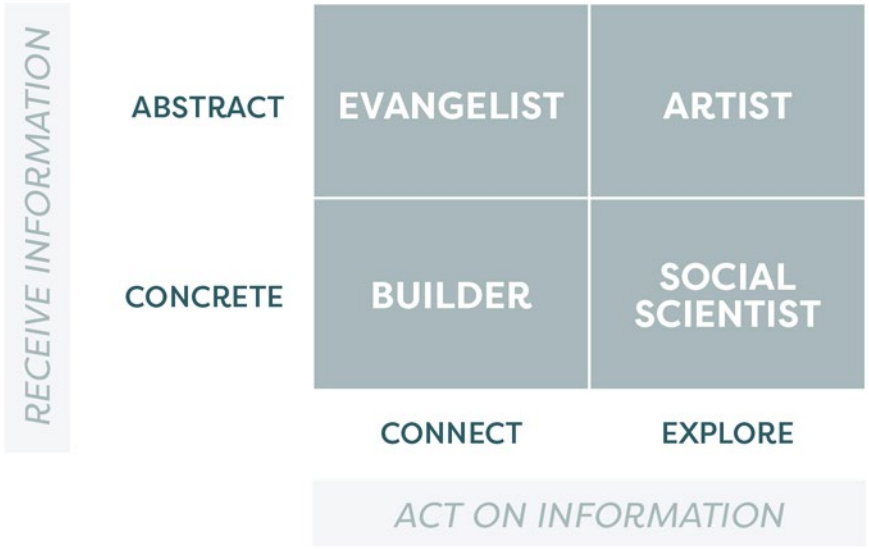

Figure 3. Paradigm of EC Planters

Artist (Abstract Explorer)

The Artist type of an EC planter gathers abstract information such as preferences, values, ideals, aspirations, and dreams. Once they receive this information, they act on this by exploring new ideas and possibilities. The Camp House's Chris Sorenson is a good example of an Artist EC planter.[50]

The Camp House is a coffee shop and café that serves high-quality coffee and food throughout the day. The week I visited the venue advertised daily evening entertainment with a cover charge. Sitting at one of the tables scattered throughout the building on a Saturday

[50] For more information, see http://thecamphouse.com/

evening, I enjoyed local musicians along with fifty to seventy-five others, largely millennials. The lighting near the coffee bar reflected a more contemporary appeal while the lighting and artwork became more "ancient" as you moved closer to the stage draped in a Byzantine mosaic. Chris demonstrated his artistic talent by creating this "ancient-future" expression of the church.

On Sunday morning, the tables were moved to the side and rows of chairs were arranged to accommodate roughly one hundred and fifty people for the Anglican worship service. This EC plant has now replicated itself in two other coffee shops in Chattanooga with further expansion plans already in the works.[51]

Social Scientist (Concrete Explorer)

The Social Scientist type of an EC planter gathers concrete information, such as facts, figures and demographics, and then uses that information to explore possible opportunities and ideas. Bob Armstrong is an example of a Social Scientist that started the Blue Jean Church in Selma, Alabama, and the Arsenal Place Business Accelerator, also in Selma.[52]

Bob is also a judge who observed significant problems in Selma related to poverty, unemployment, and racism. As a result, he started a church and business incubator as a Kingdom approach to overcome these pressing issues in the city. Six businesses have been incubated so far. The first business, G Mommas Cookies, has now expanded due to its widespread success in sales at Cracker

[51] http://mchatt.org/

[52] For more information on the church, see http://bluejeanselma.wixsite.com/bluejean

Barrel restaurants nationwide and in Walmart stores across the southeastern U.S.

Blue Jean Selma gathers a very diverse group of two hundred people each week. Armstrong notes, "We are black, white, rich, poor, middle-class, addicts, bank presidents, the mentally handicapped, doctors, lawyers, blue-collar workers, unemployed, young, and old. We are fully integrated."[53] Using the information about the tensions in the city, the church is exploring unique approaches to transform the city as they incubate various businesses in Selma.[54]

Evangelist (Abstract Connecter)

Like the Artist, the Evangelist[55] gathers abstract information, such as preferences, values, ideals, aspirations and dreams; however, unlike the Artist, the Evangelist uses this information to connect people and places together. Shawn Mikschl is an example of an Evangelist ECP church planter in Nicholasville, Kentucky.

Mikschl intentionally works alongside fellow servers, waiters, and waitresses at a local restaurant to understand them through authentic relationships that form through working together. What's unique is that his church meets at 11 p.m. on Thursday evenings since this is the time that they get off work and are available to

[53] Bob Armstrong, "A Proposal for The Millennial Project 2016" (Unpublished paper, 2016), 1.

[54] For further information, see: Samuel Lee, "A Sweet Fragrance: Networking and Partnership in Selma, AL" in *Social Entrepreneurship: Case Studies*, eds. Jay W. Moon, Roman Randall, and Joshua Moon (Nicholasville, KY: DOPS, 2017).

[55] While this term has religious meaning, it was chosen by the secular business writer Goldsby to describe a particular type of entrepreneur.

gather. What's even more intriguing is that this simple church meets at a local bar since previous venues did not prove to be appealing in the past (including Mikschl's own home). While this group has varied in attendance, about fifteen people regularly gather for prayer, worship, and Scripture teaching.

Builder (Concrete Connecter)

The Builder gathers concrete information, such as facts, figures, and demographics (like the Social Scientist). The Builder differs from the Social Scientist, however, in that the Builder uses this information to connect people and places together. Lonnie Riley exemplifies the Builder EC planter in Lynch, Kentucky.

Riley observed the deep poverty and despair when he first moved to this former coal-mining town. He initially started to serve the needs of the community through simple acts of kindness, such as hedge trimming and cookie giveaways. Gradually, he obtained and revitalized several vacated buildings to start fifteen different businesses and ministries, including a coffee shop, gas station, hotel, retreat center, fitness center, veterinary clinic, bike rental, community center, educational facility, horse stable, and trolley ride service. This led to a church plant, the Community Christian Center, and revitalization of other churches in the community. Riley describes the transformation: "What started off as a meeting of the Meridzo Center Ministries staff has evolved into a safe and friendly public place for people from all walks of life to gather together for praise and worship, Bible study, and warm family fellowship—all in the name and the loving Spirit of Jesus Christ."[56]

[56] http://meridzo.com/community-christian-center/

This ministry has resulted in significant transformation of the Lynch community (their story was recently told in the documentary *It's Only Cookie Dough*).[57]

Cautions for EC Planters

At this point, it's helpful to point out several cautions that EC planters need to consider. They surface from critiques leveled against the social entrepreneurship and Business as Mission (BAM) movements. Three main critiques warn against the marketization of society; functional platforms for shoddy business; and justifying evil via Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Let me briefly discuss each one.

First, EC planters must beware of the pervasive marketization of society. Marketization is defined by authors and business leaders M. Simpson and G. Cheney as "a framework of market-oriented principles, values, practices, and vocabularies; as a process of penetration of essentially market-type relationships into arenas not previously deemed part of the market; or as a universal discourse that permeates everyday discourse but largely goes unquestioned."[58]

In short, regarding society as just an open market can dehumanize people into simply customers or objects of exchange and be harmful to relationships. EC planters need to remember that people are more than customers. As a result, you can't base your decision solely

[57] Sentinel Group, *It's Only Cookie Dough*, DVD (Lynwood, WA, 2016).

[58] As quoted in Angela Eikenberry, "Refusing the Market: A Democratic Discourse for Voluntary and Non-Profit Organizations," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 38.4 (2009): 582–96 at 584.

on the bottom line of financial profit. Pope Benedict calls for a reimagining of the economic system in favor of a "civil economy" such that "principles other than profit and economic exchange can find a place within the economic activity itself;"[59] others call for "compassionate capitalism."[60]

I urge EC planters to adopt a triple bottom line: social capital, spiritual capital, and financial capital. In practice, this means that you must consider all three metrics for decision-making. It's not enough to make a decision, for example, based on financial profit alone; questions also must be asked about the effect on social and spiritual capital. This mitigates against the excesses of the free market system and rehumanizes people in a community of compassionate care and mutual exchange.

Second, EC planters must guard against becoming only functional platforms. When businesses are simply regarded as functional platforms to get access to people, the outcome is often shoddy business practices. The Business as Mission movement has been accused of this in restricted-access countries. Instead of thinking about the business as simply a functional device to evangelize people, EC planters need to be reminded that the first act of worship in the marketplace is to do our jobs with excellence. Shoddy business practices are not a credible witness of God's calling upon our lives. Author Dorothy Sayers says it eloquently, "No

[59] Luigino Bruni and Stefano Zamagni, *Civil Economy: Another Idea of the Market* (Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Agenda, 2016), 17.

[60] E.g., see Marc Benioff and Karen Southwick, *Compassionate Capitalism: How Corporations Can Make Doing Good an Integral Part of Doing Well* (Pompton Plains, NJ: Career, 2004).

crooked legs or ill-fitted drawers ever, I dare swear, came out of the carpenter's shop at Nazareth."[61] Both the inherent worth of the value creation developed by work and the value of evangelism are important; both need to be emphasized in ECP.[62]

Third, EC planters should be discerning of corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR has become a popular trend in many businesses for various reasons. It's meant to satisfy customers that a business is actually providing a positive social benefit. While this sounds good, CSR can be used to justify a non-ethical business practice because in the end, it benefits a good cause. For example, I observed a payday loan company that was making loans with exorbitant interest rates, which often led to heavy debt among an at-risk community. They later opened a youth center in the same community, attempting to demonstrate their CSR! In Christian circles, this can take the form of a business trying to redeem a harmful practice by using the profits for additional offerings and tithes. EC planter John Wesley encountered this problem in the eighteenth century and developed guidelines for business practices. He noted that the workers should not be physically or mentally harmed, and there should be no harm to society.[63]

[61] Dorothy Sayers, "Why Work?" In *Creed or Chaos?* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1949): 56-57.

[62] See Richard Higginson, "Mission and Entrepreneurship," *Anvil Journal of Theology and Mission* 33.1 (2017): 15–20. Higginson's recent research on Kingdom businesses in the U.K. found that Christian business owners identified the following means to express their kingdom impact: make the world a better place by providing an excellent product or service, embody Christian values in their workplace, share their faith in the marketplace, and giving to charitable and Christian causes.

[63] https://www.whdl.org/use-money-sermon-50

Fourth, EC planters should heed the advice of Wesley himself. In addition to his "do no harm" advice, he had two other measures to help business men and women. First, he encouraged accountability in regular meetings where they were asked to report how much money they made and what they did with it. This accountability encouraged Christian business owners to continually focus on how they were using their profit as a means to create social good instead of simply satisfy the desires of the flesh. Wesley's second principle was based on encouraging business people to be generous. Of the three commands in his famous statement, "gain all you can, save all you can, and give all you can," the third admonition was the hardest to put into practice. Wesley encouraged practicing generosity, though, as a spiritual practice to prevent money from finding a "resting place in your soul." He practiced his own advice and encouraged others to do the same, resulting in successful entrepreneurial church plants amidst the prevailing market economy.

Taken altogether, each of these cautions remind EC planters that you need adequate balance and reflection with your business. For example, create a robust business model with an effective value proposition based on market segments, considering the supply chain and distribution networks.[64] But don't evaluate the business on profit metrics only. You need to also consider the triple bottom line.

[64] For developing a robust business model, I recommend integrating the Fresh Expressions model (shared in next chapter) and Eric Ries' "Lean Startup" approach along with: Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur. *Business Model Generation: A Handbook for Visionaries, Game Changers, and Challengers* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2010).

Additionally, EC planters' businesses provide a venue to effectively evangelize and leverage the social networks the business generates. It's not enough to ensure the business isn't a platform for shoddy work; it should also be a vessel that reveals the Kingdom of God through the exchange of excellent products and services. Christian businesses should lead CSR efforts because they demonstrate both integrity in operations and generosity toward Christian and charitable causes amidst a watching world. The point is this: while each of these cautions is necessary to consider, they should not provide an excuse for the church to abdicate her role in the marketplace. Instead, EC planters wisely move into the marketplace using sound missiology as carefully and as sensitively as thoughtful missionaries move into any foreign culture.

A New Generation of EC Planters

So, what have we learned from these case studies? First, the search for an exemplary EC planter is not simply satisfied by finding a set of well-defined personality traits. The EC planters we looked at all had different personalities, but they did have clearly identified patterns of how they received information (from abstract to concrete data) and then acted on this information (from connecting to exploring). They all had a good idea that created value for others. They also built a good team of people with various skills, and they were able to experiment with initial ideas and pivot based upon quick feedback. They each had a strong faith background and were willing to wait in prayer for the Holy Spirit to provide direction and then make significant steps in faith when the time was right. They also had a growth mindset whereby they recognized needs and started small with what they had. Through hard work and by

leveraging their different experiences and networks, they succeeded in creating sustainable change. And for all EC planters, proper wisdom and accountability are necessary to avoid the dangers of riches, where money and business can become a cruel master instead of a devoted and effective servant.

Check out the following questions aimed at helping you engage this conversation even further. My hope is that ultimately, churches will empower a new generation of wise EC planters by cultivating the entrepreneurial mindset in their congregations.[65]

- When and how does your church engage issues in the marketplace?
- What messages are the laity hearing about their role in the marketplace to fulfill their missional calling (e.g., from biblical, theological, missiological and historical sources, as well as contemporary examples)?
- Who in your church exhibits an entrepreneurial mindset? Consider how they receive information and then act upon this information.
- How could these entrepreneurs be engaged to form teams that reach the unchurched in the marketplace through ECP?
- How can the church both encourage the right use of money and entrepreneurship without falling prey to the dangers of the same?

[65] See Greg Jones, *Christian Social Innovation: Renewing Wesleyan Witness* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2016). He stresses that Christian social innovation should be cultivated in churches through the emphasis on both tradition and innovation in what he calls "traditioned innovation."

Statesman and theologian Abraham Kuyper famously quipped, "There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry, 'Mine!'"[66] EC planters attempt to live out this bold assertion by planting churches in the marketplace where Jesus says, "Mine!" But how do you get started on this Kingdom adventure? Keep reading.

[66] https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/385896.Abraham_Kuyper. Accessed 09/30/16.

CHAPTER 4

Getting Started

I have talked with numerous church planters who were eager to engage the marketplace and engage in the ministry of ECP. I am encouraged and excited by the numerous examples of EC planters, both those described in the previous chapters and those who we simply did not have time to mention.[67] In this last chapter, I want to suggest some possible starting points if you'd like to explore this option of church planting.

To plant a robust ECP requires both a robust missiology as well as a robust business model. In traditional church-planting discussions, business men and women were not considered essential except to finance and support the mission. The unspoken message was that the real value of business work was to use the profits to support the "spiritual work."

[67] Chris Backert, U.S. Fresh Expressions director, mentioned that more than one hundred such churches have been planted across the U.S. in places like coffee shops, bars, cafes, workout facilities, pizza shops, etc. I wish there were time to mention more of these examples, such as The Table, a cafe started by United Methodist Pastor Larry Stoess as an approach to plant an ECP in a marginalized section of Louisville, Kentucky. See www.tablecafe.org

While I encourage the business community to continue giving to the church, my hope is that leaders in both business and churches will now find they have a front seat at the church-planting table and know that your work matters to God![68] My prayer is that you will find the opportunity to live out your missional calling ***within*** the marketplace, not ***in spite*** of the marketplace.

When Jesus discussed the cost of being a disciple, He said:

> "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish'" (Luke 14:28-31).[69]

To "count the cost" from a business perspective, venture capitalist and entrepreneur Sam Altman from Stanford University (who has funded 720 businesses) recommends that entrepreneurs consider four key ingredients:

1. Good idea (that solves a need and people will pay for)
2. Good product/service (something users love and will tell others about)

[68] For further elaboration on this from a pastoral perspective, see Tom Nelson, *Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011).

[69] All Scripture quotations are from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

3. Good team (that are smart, get things done, and work together well)
4. Good execution (deliver with excellence in the right metrics and milestones)[70]

Understanding and applying these key ingredients will help you wisely "build the tower." With that in mind, let's look at the necessary foundational steps for ECP within Altman's framework of entrepreneurship. We can remember the steps using the acronym ABIDES — Ask, Begin, Incubate, Develop, Excel, Sustain. The acronym reminds us that our ECP efforts depend integrally on abiding in Christ. He is the vine; we are the branches that draw nourishment (John 15). This approach combines three commonly used church-planting and business startup processes:

1. Start with the Fresh Expressions process to lay a missiological foundation, (see Figure 4 below).[71]

Figure 4. Fresh Expressions Approach for Church Planting from Learning Communities

[70] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBYhVcO4WgI

[71] The image is from: https://freshexpressionsus.org/what-we-do/

2. Integrate the Fresh Expressions approach with the Business Model Canvas (to be discussed shortly) to plan out the business approach for the ECP.
3. Finally, implement the ECP using the Lean Startup approach with pivots in a quick feedback loop (also to be discussed shortly).

To follow the ABIDE approach for ECP, I will discuss each element in order.

A — ASK the Lord for discernment and direction.

Prayer is often the starting point for great endeavors. When Jesus was burdened with compassion for the lost people around Him, He asked his disciples to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send out workers (Matt. 9:36–38). In the next verse in Matthew 10:1, Jesus prepared His disciples for ministry and sent them out. This pattern of observation, burden, prayer and action appears to be a model of God prompting people for ministry. At Athens, the Apostle Paul was moved in his spirit when he saw the idolatry and lost souls around him. He was in constant prayer; and then he acted by witnessing in the synagogue and "in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there" (Acts 17:17). We see something similar in the Apostle Paul's epistles that usually begin with thanksgiving and prayer; often these prayers contain seminal ideas that Paul develops in the rest of the letter (e.g., 1 Cor. 1:4-9; 1 Thess. 3:11-13). It appears that Paul's constant praying prepared him to write the letter about the very themes he was praying about.

This process of ECP likewise involves the preparation of prayer for purposeful, missional action. When we begin to see people and their needs, we begin to pray this prayer of both longing for and listening to the Lord. Pay attention to the Spirit's prompting and the yearnings that spring up in your heart. Then, be prepared to move in mission.

B — BEGIN with a good idea.

Altman affirms, "The best ideas are mission-oriented … There is no way to get through the pain of a startup unless you believe that the startup really matters."[72] The Fresh Expressions approach provides a helpful starting point for the mission-oriented business idea. The first step in Fresh Expressions is to listen to the community.

Listening often requires taking the time to engage people through ethnographic research methods. Participant-observation is a research method that allows potential EC planters to participate with the people long enough and deeply enough to uncover their true needs, desires, aspirations and dreams. In addition to assessing the needs, identify the assets that reside in this community. This helps you see the strengths you can build on, as well as the specific pains and emotions you'll need to address. Recording these participant observations gives you research data during the listening process.

[72] Ibid.

Researchers often use what they call "informants" for deeper insight. Characteristics of good informants are those who:

- know their context well (they are "regulars" vs. newcomers);
- are currently involved in the context;
- are sociable and verbal;
- have time for you;
- are located nearby;
- are not overly analytical (they just tell you what they know).

Informal interviews with informants involve a series of friendly conversations that allow the interviewer to slowly introduce new elements to assist the informant. In practice, this is really relationship building instead of simply interviewing. After a while, these informants may be grouped together with others into a focus group. A small focus group (six to twelve people) can represent the larger context and provide helpful responses to questions you formulate based on the initial participant-observations. Gradually, this research should lead to a good idea for a business that expresses love through service.

I — INCUBATE a good product or service.

The next logical step in the Fresh Expressions approach is to find opportunities to love and serve the people you have been listening to. As you start to love and serve in small ways, God often presents larger opportunities. This will incubate a good product or service that will serve as the basis for your business. Keep in mind that this must be based on a missional foundation. It should be a calling from God and not only a profit-making venture. Often, EC

planters have found good traction in service businesses because that environment facilitates daily conversations with larger networks of people. Once you've discovered a good idea to form a good product or service that you feel expresses your love for God and others, the next step is to organize this into a business model. This is the point where we need to integrate the Fresh Expressions process with what has become known as the Business Model Canvas.

In their book, *Business Model Generation*, authors and business leaders Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur explain, "A business model describes the rationale of how an organization creates, delivers, and captures value."[73] The authors developed an approach called the Business Model Canvas to provide what they describe as "a practical guide for visionaries, game changers, and challengers eager to design or reinvent business models."[74] This approach has nine elements that serve as the building blocks for developing a business model. These elements are mapped out on paper to demonstrate the logical connections between them.[75] Sites such as www.strategyzer.com provide explanations of the nine elements, as well as downloads, to start the process of mapping out your business model with your church-planting team.[76] The nine elements include:

[73] Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur, *Business Model Generation: A Handbook for Visionaries, Game Changers, and Challengers* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2010), 14.

[74] Ibid, 5.

[75] For a quick demonstration, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IP0cUBWTgpY.

[76] To download a copy of the Business Model Canvas, as well as access additional resources for business startups, go to: https://strategyzer.com/canvas

1. Value proposition — What needs can I solve for customers? This is what you developed from your research based upon the first two steps in the Fresh Expressions approach above.
2. Customer segments — Who will pay to solve this need and where are they located? Why would they buy this?
3. Channels — How do I distribute the products or provide the service to customers?
4. Customer relationships — How do I get, keep, and grow customers? From a missional perspective, you're asking, "How can I continue to demonstrate love for others through serving them well?"
5. Revenue streams — How does your business make money from each customer segment?
6. Key resources — What assets do you need to make this company work? Think of physical equipment, human resources, software, social networks and spiritual trust.
7. Partners — Who are the key partners and suppliers, and what do I need them to perform and when?
8. Key activities — What are the most important activities that I need to perform to make this business work?
9. Cost Structure — What costs and expenses are expended to make this product or service? Consider fixed and variable costs, your breakeven point, and the return on investment.

These nine items do not ensure a viable and mission-focused business, but they do provide a checklist of critical questions to consider. As you begin to map out the Business Model Canvas, you will quickly realize that you do not have all of the skills or capacity needed for each of the items. That's why it's vital to develop a good team of people who have the necessary skills and gifts.

D — DEVELOP a good team.

I have not met an EC planter yet who did not talk extensively about their need for a team of skilled people to come alongside them. You will need people skilled in accounting, finance, organizational planning, and taxes. If you don't recruit a team with these skills, I can say without a doubt that you will quickly find yourself in over your head and on a quick road to burnout. This is a great opportunity to approach people in the church that have these skills and gifts and invite them into the missional opportunity of ECP. Perhaps for the first time, these business people will be validated that they are essential to the *missio Dei*.

In addition to the business skills above, EC planters will need to build a team that knows how to evangelize in word, deed, and lifestyle. While evangelism has become more complex in the twenty-first century than at the beginning of the twentieth century, there are new opportunities for evangelism that did not exist in previous generations. Dealing with issues like secularism, pluralism, individualism, relativism, identity-shifting and technology are critical considerations for EC planters. Each of these complexities also provides opportunities for evangelism.[77]

E — EXCEL at good execution.

Author Eric Ries has observed that entrepreneurs often have three limitations preventing them from initiating and executing their

[77] See the following video-enhanced iBook to understand and address these concerns by W. Jay Moon, Timothy Robbins, Irene Kabete, eds. *Practical Evangelism for the 21st Century: Complexities and Opportunities* (Nicholasville, Kentucky: DOPS, 2017).

business.[78] Figure 5 below identifies and describes [79] the three obstacles:

1. Incomplete business plans — Few EC planters have experience articulating business plans that address the concerns venture capitalists are looking for. Resources are available to help you, but this can still be a daunting task.
2. Untested market demands — One of the biggest uncertainties about your proposed business is, "Will people buy this good or service?" Since you have not fully tried out your business yet, you don't have an adequate answer yet.
3. Inadequate funding —Launching a full business with all of the services you'd like to offer requires significant funding. Some organizations recommend you acquire $300,000 to $500,000 for the first three years of operation in a typical "attractional" church plant.[80] Finding this amount of money is not easy, especially when you consider there's no guarantee the church plant will survive after burning through the entire amount three years from then.

To overcome these obstacles, Ries recommends that business leaders don't launch their business with all of the services and products exactly the way you like. Instead, provide the minimum viable product (MVP) that would allow you to demonstrate what your

[78] Eric Ries, *The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses* (New York: Crown Business, 2011).

[79] This graphic was developed by the graphic software company "Smartdraw" in an email correspondence to the author in 2017.

[80] This was the number quoted to potential church planters at the Exponential East church-planting conference in spring 2017.

business is offering. This means that you invest a small amount to get a product or service people can experience. The initial success of your business is *not* the amount of profit you make; rather, Ries recommends that you initially measure your success by the amount of validated learning you gain. Allow customers to experience your business and provide valuable feedback indicating their preferences. The customer reaction then gives you priceless information you can use to help you innovate and revise your business. At the same time, you're building a core group of customers that are teaching you what they want; no doubt they'll appreciate your responsiveness to adapt to their needs. This kind of exchange develops a loyal base of customers and forms a community. It's similar to the third step in the Fresh Expressions approach focused on "building community." The last part of the feedback loop is to take this information and revise/refine your MVP. Then, send it back through the feedback loop once again.

This level of execution requires attentiveness and quick response to customers' needs and concerns. You'll likely realize your service to these customers may be the very way God has provided to you to fulfill the Great Commandment because your business is now demonstrating love to others and to God by serving others with excellence.[81]

[81] Drawing from Matthew 25 and Martin Luther, this point is made by Gene Edward Veith, Jr., *God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002).

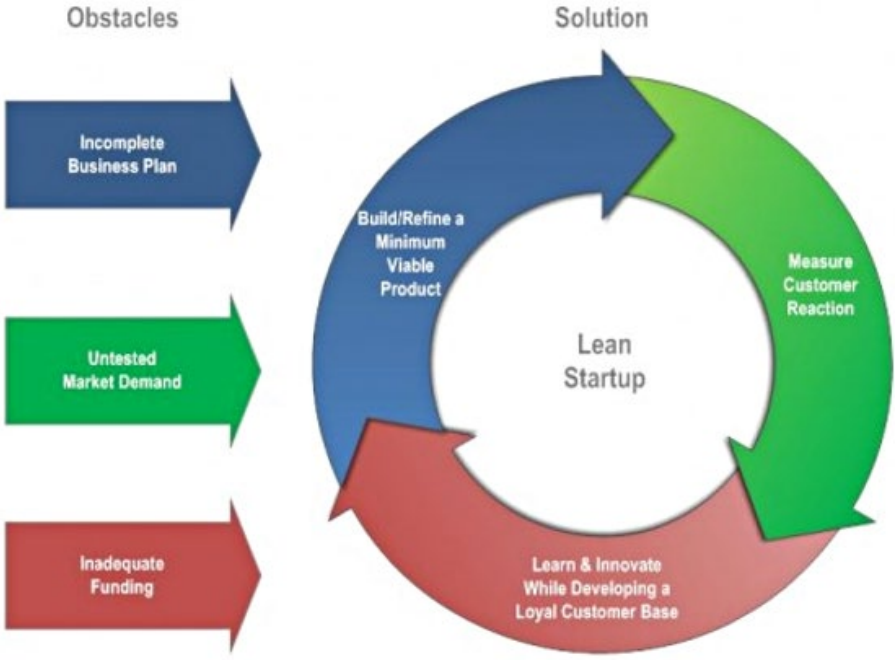

Figure 5. Startup Obstacles and Response with Lean Startup Approach

S — SUSTAIN by introducing metrics

For EC planters, the topic of metrics is very important. You know the well-known maxim, "What gets measured, gets done."[82] In other words, the metrics you pay attention to will affect how and where you direct your energies. For all businesses, they must look at financial metrics. If there's no profit, the business will eventually close and not provide a service to anyone. John Wesley wisely encouraged Christian business owners to make as much profit as

[82] For further explanation about shifting church metrics to be more missional, see Reggie McNeal, *Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church*, Jossey-Bass Leadership Network Series (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2009).

they can and save (not waste profit) as much as they can. While these are necessary conditions for business, they are not sufficient, though, for an ECP. Additionally, ECP planters must also gauge their success via two other metrics: social capital and spiritual capital (part of the three-pronged metric I shared in chapter three).

Social capital can be measured in various ways. It should be reported just as regularly as the financial capital numbers are reported. For example, EC planters can measure:

1. stories of lives that are being transformed
2. networks the EC plant is connecting with (cf. Paul and the guilds)
3. how the health and welfare (physically and emotionally) of the workers and community are affected positively by the business

In addition to financial and social capital, EC planters measure and report spiritual capital. Church planters often measure this by quantitative data like the number of conversions, baptisms, small groups, etc. In addition to those, EC planters can provide qualitative data, such as:

1. how the business has been generous in the community (cf. John Wesley's encouragement to give all that you can);
2. signs of the Kingdom inside and around the EC plant;
3. spiritual conversations engaging the unchurched or dechurched;
4. Outward evidences of inward change, such as asking more and better questions about Jesus, baptism, and prayer.
5. Measures of accountability used by the business team.

Paying attention to these metrics keeps the focus on exploring discipleship (Fresh Expressions step four) instead of simply building a business focused on profit alone.

Final Thoughts

A conclusion to this book seems like a misnomer. Instead of concluding the discussion and dreaming about ECP opportunities, I really feel like this is just the beginning. Here is my dream.

This may be the generation that's not satisfied with a Sunday-only Christian experience, separated from their everyday work life. This generation may finally wake up and say that their work actually matters to God and that they are not content with abdicating their voice in the marketplace and relegating their voice to private homes and worship buildings. This generation may not be content with a church building being vacant most of the week while it could be used for Kingdom potential every day. They may say that the secularization slide so visibly rampant in Europe is *not* inevitable in North America. And they may finally realize that most Christians will likely find they can fulfill their missional calling in obedience to the *missio Dei* within the marketplace and then equip them to do so.

If this potential captures your thoughts and you're willing to explore ECP, then we welcome you to dream further with us and others. I hope you'll explore, learn and ultimately act, responding to the need for ECP in the marketplace.

To encourage this process, Asbury Theological Seminary (ATS) has developed a Church Planting Institute that will come to your venue

and provide six key modules for effective church planting. And the Asbury Church Planting Fellows Program provides additional training and help, including some financial support to a limited number of church planters.[83]

ATS's hope is that the theoretical foundations in this book provide sufficient biblical and theological support to encourage you to connect the dots in our generation for church planting in the marketplace. We hope the practical examples gained from history and this contemporary age will also inspire you to step out in faith to God, who calls us to be on mission.

I realize that this will ultimately be a work of the Holy Spirit. Like John Wesley, I think our greatest days are still ahead of the Church as we empower church planters, "… who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God. … I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen, such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven upon earth."[84]

[83] To learn more, please visit https://asburychurchplanting.com/fellowship/

[84] John Wesley at 87 years old wrote this to Alexander Mather, quoted in Luke Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley*, 2nd. ed. 3 vols. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1871), III:632.

Note to the Reader

This short e-book draws substantially from our book, *Entrepreneurial Church Planting: Innovative Approaches to Engage the Marketplace*, specifically the book's preface, chapter 1, chapter 8, and chapter 10. In it, we explain the entrepreneurial church planting (ECP) concept in more detail:

The chapters and contributors in this complete work include:

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Business Model Canvas: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IP0cUBWTgpY

Business Model assistance. www.strategyzer.com

Table Café: www.tablecafe.org

About the Author

Jay Moon, PhD, P.E. served 13 years as a missionary with SIM, largely in Ghana, West Africa. Along with his wife and four children, he lived among the Builsa people, focusing on church planting and water development.

He is presently a professor of Evangelism & Church Planting and director of the Office of Faith, Work, and Economics at Asbury Theological Seminary. He has an MBA in social entrepreneurship and has authored three books, including *Intercultural Discipleship: Learning from Global Approaches to Spiritual Formation* in the "Encountering Mission Series" by Baker Academic. He has also edited four books, including *Entrepreneurial Church Planting: Innovative Approaches to Engage the Marketplace.*

In addition to his role as a teaching pastor in a local ECP, Jay holds a professional engineer's license and is a partner in some small businesses. He loves to spend time with his grandchildren and grown children (including their spouses) visiting tree houses, playing disc golf or throwing axes!

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