

Biblical principles of church planting essay sample

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Dr. David J. Hesselgrave is retired as professor of mission and director of the School of World Mission at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He is a past president of the Evangelical Missiological Society and is author of *Theology and Mission* and *Dynamic Religious Movements*. (Backcover) From the University of Minnesota, he earned his Doctor of Philosophy in rhetoric and public address with an emphasis in cross-cultural communication. [1] He also has a Master of Arts in speech and the Bachelor of Arts in philosophy as well as his diploma from Trinity Theological Seminary. [2] He has numerous articles, books and multimedia presentations.[3] Just to name a few, His books include *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally* (Zondervan 1978); *Contextualization-Meanings, Methods, and Models* (with Edwards Rommen, Baker 1989). [4] Content Summary

It is clear that Dr. Hesselgrave main objective was to demonstrate Apostle Paul's exemplary church-planting cycle (pg. 47) which is a ten-step process that began and ended with the commissioning of missionaries (pg. 50) Dr. Hesselgrave wants the reader to understand that in order to be have an influential missionizing and evangelizing, the key is to make conscientious decisions along with being prayerful in your plans and strategies. (pg. 50) Paul tells us that we are not to move forward with any type of plan until we have sought guidance from the Holy Spirit (pg. 44) in order to plant churches is three generalized areas: within common cultures of North America (ME-1[pg. 28]), within cross-cultural areas in North America (ME-2 [pg. 28]) and within cross-cultural areas throughout the world (ME-3 [pg. 29]).

In the writing of his book, Dr. Hesselgrave breaks it down into five parts: Part 1-the Christian and the Christian Mission; Part 2-the Christian Leader and the

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Christian Mission; Part 3-the Sending Church and the Christian Mission; Part-4 the Emergning Church and the Chrisian Mission; and Part 5-the Sending Church and the Christian Mission (Continued). With the assistance of the Paul's strategy and methodology, Dr. Hesselgrave places in motion the ten steps of Paul's church-planting ministries which are: Missionaries Commissioned, Audience contacted, Gospel Communicated, Hearers Converted, Believers Congregated, Fatih Confirmed, Leadership Consecrated, Believers Commended, Relationships Continued, and Sending Churches Convened. (pp. 47-48)

What Dr. Hesselgrave wants the reader to understand is that within this cycle, it begins with missionaries commissioned and ends with sending churches convened, and with this in mind, he wants to relay to the reader that there is only one target church (pg. 50). Although the target church may have arrived at step nine, it is mandatory that step ten (sending churches convened) ties in with the first step (missionaries commissioned) and the process begins again. Not only is this ten step process essential for the newly planted churches, but it can be a key asset for those currently in existence. It will show where the seasoned church where they are now and where they need assistance in areas that are presently not working.

As the reader peruses through Dr. Hesselgrave's book, he expounds upon each of the ten steps of the Pauline Cycle, from chapter 8 to chapter 17. He remains committed to sharing the information and the objectives of each with practicial applications. Witin each of the applicative sections, he present descriptive information by using three minor sections: Blibical principles and

precedents (pg. 36), relevant research (pg. 39), and practical reflection (pg. 40). With the presented information included in his book, he concludes with a section where he details how these unambiguous submissions can be formulated into a principal plan for the ongoing church plant.

Evaluation

Dr. Hesselgrave's book is a total success in the aspect that he set out to use Paul's strategy and its efficiency for those who desire to be church planters specifically in cross-cultural environments today; Paul was chosen by Christ to reach the Gentiles (pg. 284); and that Paul's chief purpose was to preach the Gospel and establish churches (pg. 24). This book is a success also because it maintained the theme of the Pauline Cycle throughout by including foundation-laying material and expounds upon that the aforementioned foundation with detail analysis of each of the ten states within the Cycle.

As with many books that have been written, they incorporate information that is not necessary. He stays faithful throughout the book. His technique provides for the reader a clear and organized through process as they read through the material and begin the process for their own church plants.

Dr. Hesselgrave presumes that the primary mission for churches is to spread the Gospel to draw others to the faith and be effective in service (pg. 17). It is necessary that the primary desire of all Christians, male and female alike, is to worship God in spirit and in truth and to give glory to Him and Him alone.

He refers to the church as a storm center of contemporary society (pg. 17). God's desire is for the church to grow and to proclaim the gospel of Christ and to draw believers into the local church (pg. 17). Without new churches being planted, there are less new believers being added. When new believers are added, then they are taught how to go out and add new believers which promote the Great Commission which was commanded by the risen Christ (pg. 19) In chapter 14, the Leaders Consecrated, provides a clear description of who a true leader should be. It is agreed that no church, business, etc. can never be stronger than its leaders. He shares the differences between a natural leader and a spiritual leader.

A natural leader is self-confident and spiritual leader is confident in God; natural leader make his or her own decisions while a spiritual leader seeks to find God's will; natural leaders enjoys commanding others where spiritual leadersdelights to obey God; natural leaders are independent and spiritual leaders are God-dependent (pg. 260). He also shares with the reader that spiritual leaders give authority, but also are subject to authority, and he or she must understand their level of authority (pg. 258). In order to be a successful leader of the local church, they must be found and established. In order for development of the leader can take place, a master plan which includes a three step process has to be established: allow them to teach and preach to solidify between the characteristics of natural and spiritual leadership; and provide responsibilities and ample training for those are established leaders and well as the up and coming leaders (pg. 276). If the leaders are not trained and developed, the church planted is doomed to succeed.

Planting Churches Cross-Culturally is a useful tool for all in ministry and those aspiring to increase their knowledge in church planting. It shares with the reader the importance of having key components in place such as great leadership, having a heart for missions, selecting the area for the plant, having faith, and how to attract followers as well as keep them. The Pauline Cycle incorporates God in every part, and this in turn makes the success of the church plant and development (pg. 221).

Dr. Hasselgrave assures the reader that principles implemented by the Apostle Paul are still prevalent today, and that today's missionaries will greatly appreciate following them. These principles will never be out of date because they are guided by God.