

Multiplication and Body Activation

Presented by Sara Stabe

1. Why did we transition to house churches?

a. It's not about

- i. being in a house and doing the same thing we did in a larger building. **Honey I shrunk the church.**
- ii. trying to **add** people to our group until we are too big and need to move to a building.

b. Body Ministry

- i. Our culture loves **superstars**; we will have to resist that temptation
- ii. **Paul** urged Activation and participation of the whole body
 1. Colossians 3:16, "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God."
 2. 1 Corinthians 14:26, "What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification."
 3. Ephesians 5:18-19, "and do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;"
 4. Ephesians 2:19-22 – 21-22: "in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit."
 5. Ephesians 4:14-16 - 16: "being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."
- iii. There is a place for **leadership**, for **teaching**, and even **larger gatherings**.
 1. But that's not the side we have erred on, we need to **swing** the pendulum back. But rest assured, we have those things in mind.
 2. It's **too easy to rely** on those things, and think we are doing church or fulfilling the mission of the church because we came and listened to someone talk about how to be the church (at another time and place), rather than coming together to be the church at that time, in that place.
 3. **Acts 2**, Six characteristics of the church: apostolic teaching, fellowship, worship, prayer, signs and wonders, outreach; Not trying to fit all six in every time we meet. These are on the Safe Harbor Website. For now, **Creativity. Flexibility.** We are open to ideas. There are different models. Let's be willing to let the HS mess with us on this one.
 4. Ephesians 4:11-13 – leadership is to **equip the saints for ministry**

- iv. Let's do away with the big show, attractional model, **transfer growth**. Let's be a **living organism** where all the parts of the body are functioning as they should, and each part is valued. This is what causes growth (Eph. 4:16).

c. Multiplication

- i. **NT church** multiplied – Dennis McCallum, Organic Disciplemaking, pg. 28: 1st century, most fruitful in the history of the church, estimates 1 million Christians at the end of the first century, “That’s an increase of 2000xs the number of Christians before Pentecost (perhaps 500). And all of this growth was facilitated by the process of discipleship. Without mass media, advertising, church buildings or seminaries, the primitive church expanded at a rate never equaled in the nineteen centuries since.”

- ii. **The Numbers** - Dennis McCallum, Organic Disciplemaking, pg. 28-29

d. We need to be missionally minded.

- i. **Consumerism Church vs. Covenant Church** – Tim Keller, Center Church, pg.
 1. Grandparents could make things, we are taught to be consumers
 2. Consumer relationships – we stay in them as long as long as they meet our need at a price we are willing to pay, but as soon as our needs aren't being met, or it costs us too much, we dispose of the relationship; my needs are more important than the relationship
 3. Covenant relationships – I'm committed to the relationship regardless of if my needs are being met; it's not about what I get, but what I can give; my needs are not as important as the relationship
 4. We think this way with church too.
- ii. **Church planting should be a normal thing we do.** – Tim Keller, Center Church, pp. 355-356, “In Acts, planting churches is not a traumatic or unnatural event. It is woven into the warp and woof of ministry, and so it happens steadily and normally. Paul never evangelizes and disciples without also planting a church. For decades, expositors have looked to Acts to make lists of the basic elements of ministry: Bible teaching, evangelism, fellowship, discipleship, and worship. I have always found it odd that right there in Acts, along with everything else the church is doing, is church planting – yet this element of ministry is consistently ignored! I believe there is a dubious, tacit cessationism at work. Almost unconsciously, readers of the book of Acts have said, “Yes, but that was for then. We don't need to do that now. I believe this conclusion misses a key aspect of a healthy church, namely, that church planting must be natural and customary, not traumatic and episodic....A natural church planting mind-set means that church leaders will think of church planting as just one of the things the church does along with everything else. Church planting should not be like building a building – one big traumatic event followed by a deep collective sigh of relief that it's done...Paul was continually engaged in evangelism, discipleship, and church planting...So church planting should be as much an ongoing, natural part of your ministry as worship, evangelism, fellowship, education, and service.”

- e. If we are going to multiply, we have to be **multipliable**.
 - i. **How** do we have a church where **everyone participates**, including new people and new believers? How can we multiply churches if we think we have to be able to **teach like Rita** or have a **worship band** every Sunday?
 - ii. My **AA** experience and what the Lord taught me.
 - 1. Will you lead the meeting?
 - a. **Simple**, self-sustaining, that's why they've multiplied
 - b. Read the twelve steps, read the twelve traditions, read something out of this book, etc.
 - 2. The meeting is now open for **sharing**, so open, humility, testimonies, no berating, so much encouragement, station wagon, supportive
 - a. "It is sadly the case that the church is widely viewed as a community for people who fit a certain mold, who have their lives in order. Christianity looks like a "package" that includes more than just Christ, and it all has to be earned. Christian living – even salvation – is equated with a certain lifestyle." To Live in Peace, Gornik, pg. 78
 - 3. I could feel the Holy Spirit's pleasure and love for the people there
 - iii. **Our list** of ideas, will you try it for the sake of new people and being multipliable?
 - 1. **Children** can do it, we can learn from them
 - 2. **New Believers** can do it
 - 3. **Introverts and extroverts** can do it
 - 4. Everyone can jump in without having previous experience (or having a lot) and **start growing right away**.
 - 5. **Orality** – basically learn the story well enough to be able to tell it without reading it.
 - a. People will hear the gospel every single time they come to church
 - 6. Enough **structure** that the church can immediately start functioning without a lot of work or preparation falling on one person, but still leaves enough **flexibility** and space for the **Holy Spirit** to move.