

Missional Community Multiplication

Warnings

We will now list a few warnings and considerations that should be in the minds of all senders and planters. The multiplication process can be challenging because of the relationships that we have with each other. We would be wise to recognize that these challenges exist, and that they need to be guided by the Spirit and not the flesh.

Relationship History

As a sender, it is important to consider the influence of your relationship with the planter. It is very difficult to acknowledge and be aware of these, but it is crucial to do the work of discerning these influences. Many times, we can form “feelings” or “perceptions” about a potential planter that is almost exclusively due to your relationship with them. Maybe you are related or a close family friend of the planter. This can tend to lead you to view them in light of their past immaturities, mistakes, or successes. Maybe you don’t have a past relationship with the planter, and the absence of this leads you to question their readiness.

For the planter, it is also important to consider the relational influences of those who are working with you as your senders. Questioning and doubting the input and perspective of those who have gone before you is a problem with pride at the center. Often this questioning comes from past relational encounters, usually with some form of negative experiences attached to them. We must be able to look past our relational history with others and genuinely hear from them.

We are not suggesting that all advice is correct or that all input must be categorically embraced. What we are suggesting is that you wrestle in your mind with applying God’s grace toward them so as not to allow bitterness and negativity to ultimately stifle working together for the higher purpose of multiplication.

Satan will attempt to capitalize on your relational histories in attempts to interrupt the multiplication process.

Attachment

A closely related warning to the previously mentioned one is the idea of relational attachment. For many, the idea of multiplication conjures deep feelings of fear and anxiety because it will bring with it the need for relational change with those of whom they have had deep relationships. It is true that there is no multiplication without some relational change with those into whom we have already invested our lives. However, it is important that we use the language of “change” and not “loss.” In multiplying MC’s through sending qualified planters, we acknowledge this reality of relational change as difficult, yet necessary.

An important area of relational change that many find unpredictable is the impact of MC multiplication on children. This is often felt most in the lives of children who have developed friendships with other children who will be sent out with their planting parents. Leaders (both parents or not) should be aware of this challenge and be prepared to encourage children through this time. If handled carefully and with a proper discipleship focus on the children, it can prove to be one of the most powerful testimonies and equipping opportunities for children to grow into faithful, Child multiplying disciplemakers themselves.

Past Experiences

One of the most significant hindrances to forward movement in multiplication is our own personal past experiences. Of course this affects all of life, not only multiplication, so we are aware of its presence. We are often the captives of our past mistakes, lack of success, or struggles. We fail to see the insidious doubts that arise from these memories, all due primarily to the work of our adversary who seeks to cement doubt in our minds through fear and accusation.

For the sender, you must grow in your ability to distill your past experiences down to the substance of the principles learned and not hold them in their entirety. You can often be blind to how much of your past difficulties or lack of success in ministry can impact how you discern the readiness of others to embark on a similar mission. Pride is an ever-present reality in this process, and as a Godly sender, you cannot allow your past to limit others in moving ahead.

For the planter, it is important to not allow your own personal failures or doubts in ministry to become chains that prohibit you in moving forward in multiplication ministry. Your failures or struggles in the past must become lessons from which you learn, not defeats that render you ineffective. On the positive side of this issue, a wise planter always seeks input and direction from those who have carried out multiplication ministry in their past. These principled lessons from experienced planters who have gone before you are helpful and necessary in your future ministry. Do not seek to copy or perfectly model your ministry after any one person, but learn all that you can from a principles standpoint.

Pride

Maybe the single greatest warning that we must consider in this multiplication process is our own pride. As a team of leaders with a united goal of multiplying God's family on earth, we must be humble enough to see our own natural tendencies to make it all about ourselves. This lingering cancer in our souls will certainly rear its ugly head in this process. Many a multiplication opportunity has been thwarted by the secret internal motivations of self promotion.

Dealing With Warning Areas

Embracing God's principles, as outlined in the previous section, will be the best insurance that we work together through this process in a way that is most effective and most in step with God and His direction over us. Understanding these warning areas is not meant to be a major area of focus during this process.

For both the sender and the planter, it is important to trust the broader process. The Biblical principle of a broader team of leaders working together to send and plant is God's way of working out some of these tendencies to view planters too positively or negatively. God desires to use the broadness of the Body of

Christ to weed out these unbalanced perspectives. Humility, grace, teamwork, and trusting the Spirit's work in each other are the best weapons against these areas of warning.