GUIDING PRINCIPLES:
Multiplying Churches Among
The Unreached

Floyd McClung summed up our goal for each unreached people group as he served as YWAM
International Executive Director, "It is not enough to do evangelism or to plant a single congregation. We
have not done our job unless a movement of fully indigenous, mission-minded, multiplying churches is
planted in a people group. Then they can evangelize their own people, city or nation."

While our goal -- "a movement of fully indigenous, mission-minded, multiplying churches". describes what
we want to achieve within a people group, our strategy describes how we intend to achieve it. As we
formulate strategies for specific unreached people groups, we trust God to lead us by His Word and His
Spirit. We realize we must adopt principles and adapt methods. Biblical principles will apply in every
context, whereas methods will often differ from culture to culture.

Therefore we emphasize principles to guide each church planting team as they develop their strategies to
reach their goal.

We gratefully acknowledge the profound influence and impact of Dr. George Patterson, of Church Planting
International, in the development of the following list of guiding principles.

I. LAUNCHING THE WORK

A. We have faith in the church's God-given power to reproduce and cover the earth.
   (Acts 1:8)

B. We insure that church planters know exactly what they are planting-- a church
   defined as "a group of believers of any size, committed to one another to obey
   Jesus' commands."
   (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:42-47)

C. We continually seek the Lord, to know the Scriptures and to hear His voice, trusting
   Him to lead us step by step, rather than relying upon human methods.
   (Proverbs 3:5-6; John 15:4-5)

D. We pray regularly for the lost and for one another.
   (Ephesians 6:18-20)

E. We pursue love, joy, spiritual vitality, and mutually beneficial relationships with
   fellow workers and locals, knowing that this is the only way to bear the eternal
   fruit we seek.
   (John 15:4-5)

F. We keep up regular communication with our sending church(es).
G. We may use "low profile" methods in fields where authorities are hostile. This may involve bi-vocational/"tent making" ministry to gain access as well as the use of methods of evangelism, worship, and training suited to **small underground house churches**.

H. We **work together** with others who embrace New Testament principles, to accomplish a common goal.
   (Acts 10:23, 11:12)

I. We commit to reaching the **goals** God gives, inspite of how many years it takes.
   (Luke 9:62)

J. We **target** one specific unreached people group.
   (Acts 10:1)

K. We affirm that in the same way the Holy Spirit separated Paul and Barnabas from the Antioch church, **the Holy Spirit separates** church planting teams from their sending structures to do the work to which He calls them.
   (Acts 13:1-3)

L. We **bond with the people** by living with them from the beginning, gaining a good grasp of the language and appreciating their culture, in an attitude of servanthood and humility.
   (Phil. 2:5-8; Ruth 1:16)

M. We accept **spiritual warfare** as a daily reality, seeking to grow in our skills of worship, warfare and intercession to more effectively resist the devil and establish Christ's victory.
   (Eph. 6:10-12)

**II. TEACHING THE GOSPEL**

A. We rely upon God for **signs and wonders**.
   (Matt. 10:7-8; I Thes. 1:5)

B. We build **relationships with local people**, seeking **potential leaders** from the start.
   (Luke 10:6-7)

C. We normally aim at reaching **heads of households**, knowing that they are potential leaders who can share the gospel with their families and friends.
   (Acts 16:31)

D. We seek a **receptive segment** of the people group, who are **content with their own culture**. (As foreigners, we may attract people eager merely for cultural change and material gain.)
   (Acts 10:2 ; Acts 8:18-23)

E. We proclaim the **essentials of the gospel** (especially the death and resurrection of Christ and the need for repentance) in **culturally relevant** ways.
   (Luke 24:46-48)

F. We only use evangelistic **methods** that the local people can quickly **imitate**--simple enough for new believers, affordable, technologically appropriate, etc.
   (I Cor. 2:3-5; John 4:39)
G. We integrate evangelism and mercy ministry—serving people through both word and deed.  
(Luke 10:36-37; Gal. 2:9-10)

H. We and our converts willingly face persecution.  
(Acts 4:13-20)

I. We model the Christian walk and ministry skills we teach as we mobilize the local people.  
(Mark 3:13-15)

J. We regularly and prayerfully review our God-given goals and evaluate the results. We change our methods accordingly.  
(Eph. 5:15-17; I Cor. 9:19-27)

K. We call people to repent.  
(Acts 2:37-38)

L. We baptize sincerely repentant sinners without unnecessary delays and serve them the Lord's Supper. When possible we baptize whole families.  
(Acts 2:41, 8:35-38, 18:8)

III. GATHERING BELIEVERS

A. We bring the converts together into small groups to encourage love, fellowship and accountability.  
(Acts 2:42-47)

B. We enable the people to create their own culturally relevant worship forms based upon apostolic models rather than "importing" forms from our culture.  
(Rom. 14:4-6)

C. We do not build the church around the church planting team, instead the team serves as "scaffolding" which is quickly removed as the indigenous church emerges.  
(Acts 14:23, 20:36-38)

D. We establish churches from the beginning, avoiding mere "preaching points" where people simply come to hear a sermon, prayer, and music.  
(Acts 2:41-42; James 1:22)

E. We make disciples who are obedient to Jesus' basic commands (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:37-47):
   1) love God and others; family, fellow disciples, neighbors and even enemies (forgiveness).  
      Luke 10:25-37
   2) repent, believe, receive the Holy Spirit (these go together, we can't do one without the others) Mark 1:15,  
      John 20:22
   3) be baptized (this includes living forever the new, holy life it signifies)  
      Matt. 28:19-20
   4) celebrate the Lord's Supper (cultivating communion with Christ and His people) Luke 22:14-20
   5) pray daily, Matt. 6:5-13
   6) give generously, Matt 6:19-21

F. We consider partnering locally with existing churches or denominations only if they put Jesus' commands (John 14:15) and church reproduction above all human policies. (For Example, we avoid planting churches with those who prefer man-made requirements which are not in the New Testament for: baptism, serving the Lord's Supper, becoming a church leader, starting near-by daughter churches.) We have the Biblical and organizational freedom to start new church movements and associations. (Rom. 15:20)

G. We recognize the priesthood of all believers and mobilize each one for gift-based ministry. Church planting teams model functioning in spiritual gifts and release all God's people to minister one to another using their unique giftings. (Eph.4:11-16; I Cor. 14:26)

IV. MOBILIZING LEADERS

A. We model and develop non-authoritarian servant leaders, who lead rather than drive their flocks. (Matt. 20:25-28; I Peter 5:1-4)

B. We teach emerging leaders to discern three levels of authority for the activities of the church:

1st Level: New Testament Commands (of Jesus and His Apostles) They are required of all disciples; we practice them under any circumstances; we never prohibit them. They are listed above. (See III.E.)

2nd Level: New Testament Practices (things done by the apostles but not commanded) We do not have the authority to require nor prohibit their practice. Examples include: worship on Sunday, baptizing immediately, fasting, using one communion cup, etc.

3rd Level: Human Customs (traditions or practices with no basis in the New Testament) Their only authority is our voluntary agreement within a local congregation; we cannot force them on other congregations; we must prohibit them when they impede obedience. Examples include: choir, church buildings, pulpits, any non-Biblical requirement for ordination, etc. (Matt. 15:1-20)

C. We, as outsiders, avoid pastoring the new churches. Only locals lead meetings to which the public is invited. (Titus 1:5)

D. We avoid dependency upon foreign finances in the development of new churches. (II Cor. 8:2-3, 9:10-11)

E. We "work ourselves out of a job" as we mobilize potential leaders who model evangelism, disciple new converts, lead gatherings, etc. (For example Paul mobilized Titus of Antioch, Timothy of Lystra, Gaius of Derbe, Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, Tychicus and Trophimus of Western Asia – Acts20:4)

F. We train local leaders "behind the scenes" allowing them to lead their own people. (Acts 18:26)
G. We **multiply clusters** of closely-knit churches. One lone church seldom survives long. Where possible, we encourage regular united gatherings of these groups. (Acts 2:46, 20:20)

H. We **coach leaders locally, on-the-job**, developing "Paul-Timothy" relationships for training elders, church leaders, local church planters, etc. We bring the teaching to them, rather than sending them away to outside institutions. (Acts 16:1-3; II Tim 2:2)

I. We emphasize "**learning by doing**" as we train leaders to build up the church and to reach the lost. (Eph. 4:11-16)

J. We enable each church to **reproduce into daughter and granddaughter churches**, resulting in a movement of church multiplication. (I Thes. 1:7-8; and as seen in Acts 13, 14 etc.)

K. We encourage the new churches to send their own church planters to reproduce cross-culturally. (Acts 19:29; Phil. 2:25)

L. We commend the churches into God’s hands. We depart, trusting the Holy Spirit to direct and empower the indigenous leaders to **continue, at any cost, to reproduce new leaders and churches who disciple their nation.** (Acts 14:21-24, 20:32)