

# AFM CHURCH-PLANTING MODEL

The new AFM Church Planting Model is not intended to be linear. Several aspects contained in the main circle of ministry can be taking place at the same time.

## EXPECT MULTIPLICATION:

- Holy Spirit guides the spiritual movement
- Disciple-making cycle repeats continually as project grows
- Believers organized into multiplying churches

When we expect a tornado, we prepare for it. When we expect that a church committed to God will want to multiply, then we should work with God to prepare for that as well. While no human should try to *force* a spiritual movement, neither should we create unnecessary barriers to one. And when a movement is on God's agenda, we should cooperate with Him all we can.

When I apply this principle to sharing the gospel with Tiko, I also prayerfully consider who *Tiko* might want to share the gospel with. Then, as I share with Tiko, I share in terms and through methodology that Tiko can remember and effectively use as well. When I apply this principle to every other aspect of disciple-making, I am equipping Tiko to be a disciple-maker rather than just a church member.

The Expect Multiplication heading is placed in the center of our model because it's a theme that impacts everything else. And if you start with Connect, then go clockwise around the circle taking the first letter of every heading and ending with the E in Expect Multiplication, you'll find the acronym *CIRCLE*.

## PREPARE

Prayerfully prepare to make disciples cross-culturally.

*Matt. 28:18-20*

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the

*Holy Spirit,* <sup>20</sup> *teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."* Amen.

- Let Jesus change you
- Get involved in soul-winning in your community
- Training
- Fundraising

Being a disciple is good preparation for making disciples. In Matthew 28:18-20 Christ commissions his disciples to become disciple-makers. They were not to rest content with merely following Christ, themselves; they were to assist others in doing the same. The Prepare aspect of the model encompasses learning how to be disciples as well as disciple-makers, and then engaging in training and other responsibilities required before launching into ministry in another country. Too often I hear people say they don't have the skills needed to be cross-cultural missionaries. One good way to develop those skills is to start making disciples at home. In the "faithful steward" parable of Luke 12:42-48, Christ indicates that *preparing* to do God's will is also a part of *doing* God's will (see verse 47). This need for preparation is one of the reasons why AFM is modularizing their missionary training program to allow non-missionaries to attend portions related to discipleship and church-planting. If you are interested, go ahead and give us a call!

## CONNECT

Connect with God & Connect with People

*Matt. 22:37-40*

<sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." <sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

- Pray abundantly!
- Meet their needs as Jesus would
- Learn heart language
- Study the culture

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Jesus' model for making disciples was founded on human relationships. In following the "love your neighbor" principle recorded in Matthew 22:37-40 Christ mingled with people and made himself available for friendship as well as ministry. As we engage in the Connect aspect of cross-cultural disciple-making, we do the same thing. We make ourselves available. We acquire language of the people and develop friendships. We serve their needs in practical ways. We share the struggles that burden their hearts and the joys that brighten their days. We earnestly pray for those around us and do all we can to represent the truth of God's kingdom and how to apply it relevantly to the concerns of life.

## INTRODUCE

Introduce the Gospel

*John 12:32*

<sup>32</sup> *And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."*

- Pray for divine appointments
- Wait on God to bring a person of peace
- Introduce them and their networks to Jesus

We depend on God to provide a "son of peace" (see Luke 10:6) – one or more individuals willing to accept us, and with the influence, and the will, to provide access to their community. As God leads, we cooperate with His Spirit and holy angels as we introduce our friends to Christ and the plan of salvation. We use terms easy for them to understand, remember, and share with their family and community members. We appeal for them to be reconciled to God and support them as they respond.

## RENEW

Renew thinking toward Biblical worldview

*Romans 12:2*

<sup>2</sup> *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

- Earnestly intercede for spiritual transformation
- Humbly walk with people as the Holy Spirit transforms them by the renewing of their minds
- Equip new disciples to read and study scripture

It's hard to live differently if we think the same. In Romans 12:2, Paul associated a transformed life with a renewed mind. As believers learn to think from a biblical perspective, it naturally leads them to live from a biblical perspective as well. But what is learned can only be truly understood when it is applied and believers can see how it works. The "renew" aspect of disciple-making prayerfully guides new believers through the Bible to discover major teachings and how the conflict between Christ and Satan impacts their lives and communities. As they learn the rules of this warfare, they also need to learn how to appropriately engage this war on *God's* side. They need answers for their spiritual questions, and practical guidance for applying these answers and developing lives that honor God. They also need to know how to study the Bible for themselves and how to find answers, when needed, to address new questions that may arise.

## CULTIVATE

Cultivate a Christ-centered culture

*Matt. 7:24-25*

<sup>24</sup> *"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: <sup>25</sup> and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.*

- Disciple prayer warriors
- Teach practical Christianity
- Support people as they apply what they are learning

In Matthew 7:24-25, Christ said His true followers were those who based their entire lives on his teaching. Our verse from Romans 12:2 agrees. In keeping with this logic, the Cultivate aspect of disciple-making continually brings cultural life before God for transformation. Where a biblical doctrine may explain what happens to a person after they die, the Cultivate aspect of

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discipleship asks how to care for the family and community members left behind. Where doctrines may teach that divorce is wrong, the Cultivate aspect of discipleship seeks to identify the dysfunctional behaviors that lead to divorce and the attitudes and behaviors that lead to happy marriages. It then helps new marriages to avoid catastrophe and marriages already in chaos to get on a track towards godly relationships. Youth are prepared for the responsibilities of adulthood, and new mothers learn to care of their children. Believers learn how to develop lives that revolve around prayer, worship and ministry. They learn how to resist temptation and avoid activities that bring shame to God. Applied principles from 1 Corinthians 12 make good use of the talents of every believer and discipleship becomes a part of cultural life.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Develop leadership to continue disciple-making

*Eph. 4:11-13*

<sup>11</sup> And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

- Seek God's counsel in selecting future leaders
- Coach the leaders that emerge in the group
- Focus on networks
- Pray for outpouring of God's Spirit

Our concern here is spiritual *maturity* more than *authority*. God needs mature Christians who take their relationship with Him seriously; who model how to apply biblical principles and live Christ-like lives. In Ephesians 4:11-13, the responsibility of key leaders was to equip believers for the work of ministry, and to help them measure up to Christ's standard of character and maturity. Leadership Development prepares leaders to do this and it involves every other aspect of disciple-making. As the original disciple-makers connect with people, they model how new leaders can do the same. As they present the gospel in user-friendly terms and forms, they encourage and empower

emerging leaders to do the same. As believers take interest in spiritual responsibilities, disciple-makers step aside and give them room to grow. Additional training is also provided to deal with more common concerns associated with *leading out* and for organizing for outreach and community service. Cooperation is also developed between local leaders and leaders of the church at large.

## Transfer & Follow Up

*1 Tim. 6:11-16*

<sup>11</sup> But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. <sup>12</sup> Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. <sup>13</sup>

*I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, <sup>14</sup> that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, <sup>15</sup> which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, <sup>16</sup> who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.*

- Entrust new movement to praying, maturing disciples
- Hand over project to local SDA mission
- Visit projects to provide continued guidance

As believers mature and turn into leaders, the original disciple-makers increasingly shift from leaders to coaches, then from coaches to observers and counselors. They work with God, teach others to do the same, then allow them to do that. Eventually, their role is to move on and begin work in a new area.