**A Well-Conceived Plan**

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? 29 Otherwise, when she has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule her, 30 saying, ‘This person began to build and was not able to finish.’ (Luke 14:28-30, NRSV)

Please prayerfully respond to the following questions. We at Bridges know that the Holy Spirit may redirect at any time, so the intent is not to lock you into any of the following answers but to help you think clearly about your current understandings and intentions. Life gets busy and often that busyness only lets us react. It is important to lay a firm foundation to rely on. This writing exercise gives you a chance to express all of these but at whatever level of certainly and progress you currently are experiencing.

“Plans are worthless. Planning is everything” –Winston Churchill

**YOUR VISION**

*Then the LORD answered me and said: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it.* *For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Habakkuk 2.2-3*

What has God placed in your heart – what is the vision to do for the people he has connected you to?

Consider

a). What has God said to you?

b). What are you still discerning?

c). What are you certain of?

d). What still seems murky and unclear?

**PLANT YOURSELF/Move In**

*Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the laborer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. 8 Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; 9 cure the sick who are there, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you. (Luke 10:7-9)*

What group of people has God called you to live among and love?

Consider

a). Why these people?

b). How will you plan to plant yourself with these people?

c). How will you spend your time?

d). In what ways might you gain permission to have influence in this community?

**DIG FOR THE GOSPEL/Learn**

*Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. 23 For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, ….so that they would search for God﻿[[1]](#footnote-1)j﻿ and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. 28 For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’ (Acts 17:22-28)*

Consider

a). How do you see God working in this community now?

b). What are the primary needs of your people, both from their perspective and from your perspective?

c). What are some primary Biblical scriptures and images that you believe would be central and meaningful for these people?

d). What words, metaphors, and illustrations would be helpful for a person to experiencing the gospel?

**WATER THE COMMUNITY/Add Value/Give & Receive**

*But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. (Jeremiah 29:7)*

How do you plan to bless the community in which you have planted yourself?

Consider

a). What do you understand the community to be?

b). How can you build a relationship with this community?

c). How can you bless and serve these people?

b). How can this community bless and serve you?

**TEND THE GROWTH/Help them to live like Jesus/Discipleship**

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19)*

How will you identify people who are ready for discipleship and explore with you what it means to follow Jesus?

Consider

a). What are a few of the ways to engage people with the idea of discipleship?

b). What regular habits of discipleship are you inviting people to experience?

c). What are some common experiences you hope each member of the community will one day have? (i.e. stories of healing, new freedom, deliverance, salvation, repentance, change)

d). How can you track these and what do you celebrate?

**GATHER THE HARVEST/Gather**

*When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness. (Acts 4:31)*

How do you plan to gather together people who are observers and Christ Followers and connect them to your discipleship group?

Consider

a). What are the regular habits that are normal and expected to be a part of the group?

b). Where and when will you gather?

c). How will your community be in relationship with the larger body of Christ?

d). Which of the 12 Practices are most significant to your community?

**REPLANT/Send**

*What you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well.(2 Timothy 2:2)*

How will you identify people who can replant themselves in another community?

Consider

How will you identify and assess these people?

How will you coach these people?

How will you train these people?

How will you support these people?

SURVEY: What’s a Christ-following Community?

Take a minute and give each of the following a score from 1-5.

1. Don’t Want It; 2. Not Important; 3. Somewhat Important; 4. Important; 5. A must

( ) Gather (Meet regularly)

( ) Pray and study scripture

( ) Make and Grow Disciples of Jesus

( ) Express love to one another in actions

( ) Have an identified leader(s)

( ) Give financially

( ) Share the good news

( ) Practice hospitality, justice, and reconciliation

( ) Make a difference in your community

( ) Practice Baptism and The Lord’s Supper

( ) Self-identify yourselves as a Christ-following community

( ) Send out missionaries to start new churches

( ) Land

( ) Building

( ) Paid staff

( ) Educated clergy

( ) Sundays

( ) Preaching

( ) Music

( ) Singing

( ) Gather in large, publicly advertised groups every week

( ) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. j Other ancient authorities read *the Lord* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)