

## “Church Planter”

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Kindle Notes: Dave Kraft

In general, complementarian churches have done a deplorable job of equipping and empowering women to use their God-given gifts in the church. I have found that the main question both liberals and conservatives often start with is not is this man a Christian but rather, can this man grow the church.

Most churches do not grow beyond the spiritual health of their leadership. In short, a rescued man is growing in genuine love for God and neighbors. Time and again, amid the challenges of pastoral ministry, this divine, more-than-subjective authorization is a major means of pastoral perseverance. Ministry is more than hard. Ministry is impossible. And unless we have a fire inside our bones compelling us, we simply will not survive. Pastoral ministry is a calling, not a career. It is not a job you pursue just because you like attention, or because your mom thinks you'd be good at it, or because it does not involve heavy lifting. I am continually shocked at how many men are trying to do ministry without a clear sense of calling. One of the most interesting features of calling is that whether you look in the pages of the Bible or the annals of church history, God rarely calls two people in the exact same way. It is very important not to standardize the calling experience. An aspiring pastor/church planter who is seeking to test his sense of calling should look for confirmation in at least three areas:

- Heart confirmation
- Head confirmation
- Skill confirmation.

It is important to recognize that doubts and feelings of insecurity are not signs that you aren't called. Head Confirmation in a genuine call to ministry manifests itself not only in the thoughts and desires of the called person but also in his gifts, abilities, and skills. Skill Confirmation. Does this man have the gifts required to perform ministry? These two examinations of character and skill are paramount for the one who is called because he is able to check his subjective prompting objectively against the church's evaluation. Mark Driscoll often said, “Acts 29 guys are to believe in sola Scriptura but not solo Scriptura.” Because of common grace, we can glean principles from the business world—all truth is God's truth. Being a pastor/church planter requires three basic skills: leading, teaching, and shepherding. To be the lead pastor in a church plant, however, you have to be able to lead—to cast vision, to create energy, to motivate, to inspire, and to build systems. Functionally, elders in the local church do three main things:

- Guard the teaching ministry of the church.
- Ensure the spiritual care of the church.
- Oversee the direction of the church.

Prophets—Guardians of Truth

Priests—Shepherds of the people

Kings—Builders of the Vision

Kings tend to ask the question “How?” They function like executives of the church because they spend a great deal of time and energy building and executing plans to sustain and grow a healthy church. Deacons lead the church by serving her. Elders serve the church by leading her. C. Peter Wagner writes this about leadership: “The gift of leadership is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to set goals in accordance with God’s purposes for the future and to communicate these goals to others in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish those goals for the glory of God.”

Regarding the gift of leadership, a pastor must always be fearless before his critics and fearful before his God. Being a good preacher may or may not make you a better shepherd, but being a good shepherd will definitely make you a better preacher.

The role of the pastor is to connect undisciplined people with disciplined ones so that they learn how to discipline themselves. For most of us, redeeming the time will mean that we work hard to eliminate unnecessary time suckers in our week, that we design a system for answering e-mails efficiently, that we think through our weekly schedules and priorities beforehand. The essence of sin is man substituting himself for God, while the essence of salvation is God substituting himself for man. As Bryan Chapell often says, “We put our do’s before our who’s. Wayne Grudem defines sanctification this way: “Sanctification is a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and more like Christ in our actual lives.”

All sin flows from valuing something more highly than we value God. In his book *Love Walked Among Us*, Paul Miller notes that compassion is the dominant emotion that the Gospel writers ascribed to Jesus. The Gospel writers describe Jesus compassionately looking at people nearly forty times, indicating that it was a regular practice. I find that I can get so immersed in the busyness of ministry that I lose the pleasure of ministry. There is a difference between simply being busy and being hurried. Being busy is about the things you have to do. Being hurried is the spiritual, mental, and emotional state that you are in when trying to do the things you have to do. You can be busy without being hurried. The Enemies of Compassion are:

- Busyness
- Hurriedness
- Self-righteousness
- Self-protection

The root of the word compassion in English means “to be together [com] with someone’s pain [passion].” So to demonstrate compassion toward someone is to agree at that moment to enter into suffering with them.

“The local church is a community of regenerated believers who confess Jesus as Lord. In obedience to Scripture they organize under qualified leadership, gather regularly for preaching and worship, observe the biblical sacraments of baptism and Communion, are unified by the Spirit, are disciplined for holiness, and scatter to fulfill the Great Commandment and the Great Commission as missionaries to the world for God’s glory and their joy.”-Mark Driscoll

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Contextualization is speaking to people with their terms, not on their terms. A good preacher, for example, must be able to exegete not only the text but also the culture of the hearers in order to be a faithful and fruitful missionary.