

Qualifications for Participation in a Church-Planting Team

Sovereign Grace Ministries

Introduction

Within Sovereign Grace Ministries, team ministry characterizes the church-planting endeavor. It has been our experience that effective church planting happens when a man called by God to plant a church is surrounded by a team committed to the gospel and eager to support him in that work.

It always amazes us how the hearts of so many believers race with a desire to serve in this courageous task. Christians will make extraordinary sacrifices to participate in something that is evident in Scripture, effective on earth, and rewarding for eternity. There is nothing more worthy of our devotion and sacrifice than the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In forming a church-planting team, it can be tempting to try to attract as many people as possible. We have found, however, that this approach leads the church planter to include unqualified team members, who eventually become a strain on the young church, a distraction to the church planter, and even a stumbling block to the people he is trying to reach.

On the other hand, when the right people are on board and committed to faithfully participating through prayer, service, giving, outreach, and the modeling of godly character, the church-planting team becomes a column of pillars that uphold the young church. How does the church planter identify these people?

Qualifications

Those who participate in a church-planting team should have these characteristics:

1. Have a love for Jesus and a passion for the gospel
 - are amazed by the grace God has shown them
 - are committed to living all of life in light of the gospel
 - consistent pursuit of God through spiritual disciplines
2. Are humble
 - have pursued others' input without becoming offended
 - consistently encourage others
 - are accustomed to confessing sin
3. Have a servant's heart
 - have demonstrated commitment to the local church
 - are eager to support the new church

4. Agree with the Sovereign Grace statement of faith
 - understand and support our values and our methods of applying our Statement of Faith
5. Are committed to biblical fellowship
 - have built friendships that withstand the test of time
 - see other people as essential to their pursuit of growth
6. Have a biblical view of pastoral care
 - respect and value their leaders
 - joyfully follow and serve those over them
7. Have evaluated their motives
 - are joining the church plant to serve and sacrifice for others
 - do not have selfish ambition for promotion
8. Have a stable marriage
 - presents a compelling portrait of Christ and the church
 - the husband is leading and loving his family
 - the wife has a vision for being a wife, mother, and homemaker before other pursuits
9. Children respond to their parents' leadership
 - children have a growing relationship with their parents
 - children value and respect their parents' input and authority
10. Are faithful stewards and financially stable
 - have a record of financial stewardship and are committed to tithing and giving offerings
 - are living on a realistic budget and can afford to move
11. Demonstrate faith toward God for church planting
 - are willing and able to adapt to change and face the inevitable challenges of church planting