



Birmingham Theological Seminary
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MS1615 Techniques of Church Planting	Professor: Paul B. Long, Jr, D.Min, Ph.D.
Summer Semester 2025	Cell Phone: (601) 720-8905
Thurs. 6/5/25, 3:00-9:00 Fri. 6/6/25, 8:30-5:00 Sat. 6/8/25, 8:30-2:00 Sat. 8/2/25, 8:30-5:00	E-mail: longbrownpaul@gmail.com
Course Timeline: 6/6/25 – 8/2/25	
Course Location: BTS, Rm A201	
Class Hours: 2	

Description of Topic

An introduction to the task of church planting in diverse ethnic contexts, with particular emphasis on one's own culture. Emphasis is on an *introduction* to the theology, research, and strategies pertaining primarily to urban church planting, from the perspective of the following:

- **Theology:** missiology, ecclesiology, theology of the city
- **Research:** anthropology, sociology, research approaches
- **Strategy:** models, principles, challenges, resources

Purpose

- **Motivational/developmental:** to develop student's calling and skills
- **Equipping:** to introduce church planting issues, models, and principles for a church planter's "toolkit," hence the term "techniques" in the official course description.
- **Pedagogical:** to train the student to teach and to lead others into church planting.
- **Doxological:** to glorify God through the academic learning process.

Objectives (measurable output and results)

- Each participant will become aware of major issues relating to urban church planting through bibliographical study, class discussion, and fieldwork. [Cognitive]
- Each participant will have the opportunity to assess his particular strengths and gifts for church planting ministry. [Character]
- Students will work in teams to analyze a particular urban setting and propose an appropriate church planting strategy. [Competencies]
- The class will attempt to make a real contribution to urban church planting through field work assisting or promoting an existing or eventual church plant. [Kingdom Service]

Course Requirements and Assessments:

- 1) Biblical Rationale for Planting Churches: (5-page essay) 15%
- 2) Annotated Bibliography: 10 books and resources 15% (600-1000 pages reading/survey)
- 3) Survey and Proposal for a Current Plant, to include the following presented orally Aug. 2, and with written supporting outlines, charts, summaries, etc. 50% (final exam)
 - Demographic analysis and target focus Progress report June 20
 - SWOT assessment Progress report July 11
 - Strategy Proposal (Vision, Values, Vehicles) [Class presentation: Aug. 2]
- 4) Assessment and vision of how you are best equipped and called to Great Commission ministry 10% (Personal philosophy of church planting)
- 5) Class participation 10%

Due Dates

June 20 & July 11 [Email reports of progress toward final]

August 2, 2025: All written work due but may be submitted at any time.
Progress Reports due

Course Texts: Generally, 500-1000 pages are expected for a two-credit hour course. The number of pages read and surveyed to be indicated in an annotated bibliography.

Primary Texts

Keller, Tim. 2012. *Center Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. (380 pages)

Leonard, John S. 2013. *Get real: Sharing your everyday faith every day*. Greensboro: New Growth Press. (183 pages, evangelism)

Malphurs, Aubrey. 1998. *Planting growing churches for the 21st century: A comprehensive guide for new churches and those desiring renewal*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.

Ott, Craig and Wilson, Gene. 2011. *Global Church Planting*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academics, (418 pages), missional.

Steffen, Tom A. 1996. *Connecting God's story to ministry: Cross-cultural storytelling at home and abroad*. La Habra, CA: Center for Organizational and Ministry Development.

*Stetzer, Ed. 2006. *Planting Missional Churches*. Nashville, Tenn.: B and H Publishing. (362 pages), [Basic text]

Swartz, Christian A. 1998. *Natural church development: A guide to eight essential qualities of healthy churches*. Carol Stream, Illinois: ChurchSmart Resources.

Other Useful Texts

Arn, Win, and Charles Arn. 1982. *The Master's plan for making disciples*. Pasadena, CA: Church Growth Press.

Bakke, Ray. 1997. *A theology as big as the city*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press.

Chester, Tim and Steve Timmis. 2008. *Total church: A radical reshaping around Gospel and community*. Wheaton: Crossway.

Coleman, Robert E. 1963. *The master plan of evangelism*. Westwood, NJ: Flemming H. Revelle Company.

Engle, James F. 1977. *How can I get them to listen?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House.

Engle, James F. and Wilbert Norton. 1975. *What's gone wrong with the harvest: communication strategy for the church and world evangelism*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House.

Faircloth, Samuel D. 1991. *Church planting for reproduction*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.

George, Carl F. 1993. *How to break growth barriers*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.

Green, Michael. 1970. *Evangelism in the early church*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Hiebert, Paul G. and Eloise Hiebert Menesis. 1995. *Incarnational ministry: Planting churches in band, tribal, peasant, and urban societies*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.

Hunsberger, George R. and Craig Van Gelder. 1996. *The church between gospel and Culture: The emerging mission in North America*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Jenkins, Philip. 2002. *The next Christendom: The coming of global Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kilbourn, Phyllis, ed. 1997. *Street children: A guide to effective ministry*. Monrovia, California: MARC.

- Kreider, Larry. 2001. *House church networks: A church for a new generation*. Ephrata, PA: House to House Publications.
- Lutz, Tom and Heidi Unruh. 2022. *Equipping Christians for kingdom purpose in their work: A guide for all who make disciples*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers.
- McClung, Floyd. 1991. *Seeing the city with the eyes of God: How Christians can rise to the urban challenge*. Tarrytown, New York: Chosen Books.
- Neighbor, Ralph W. Jr. 1990. *Where do we go from here? A guidebook for the cell Group church*. Houston: Touch Publications, Inc.
- Noll, Mark A. 2009. *The new shape of world Christianity: How American experience reflects global faith*. Downers Grove: IVP.
- Ortiz, Manuel. 1996. *One new people: Models for developing a multiethnic church*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press.
- Park, Andrew Sung. 1996. *Racial conflict and healing: An Asian-American theological perspective*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
- Perkins, John M. with Jo Kadlecsek. 1995. *Resurrecting hope*. Ventura, California: Regal Books.
- Perkins, John M. 1993. *Beyond charity: The call to Christian community development*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.
- Romo, Oscar I. 1993. *American mosaic: Church planting in ethnic America*. Nashville: Broadman Press.
- Tillapaugh, Frank R. 1982. *Unleashing the church: Getting people out of the fortress and into ministry*. Ventura, California: Regal Books.
- Van Gelder, Craig. 2000. *The essence of the church: A community created by the Spirit*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.
- Warren, Rick. 1995. *The purpose-driven church: Growth without compromising your message and mission*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Company.

CATALOGUE COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will cover the theological, spiritual, personal, relational, and organizational dimensions of church planting. It will offer a detailed task analysis for every stage of the church planting process from before going to the field to the reproduction of daughter churches. Topics include: a theology of church planting, self-assessment of suitability for church planting,

personal and family life of the church planter, developing a philosophy of ministry, conducting basic demographic studies, outreach in the church plant, leadership development, understanding and applying church health principles, and developing the basic ministries necessary for the planting of a healthy, growing, reproducing church.

BTS Format, Style, and Writing Standards:

All research papers must be formatted in accordance with Turabian Chicago standards including the title page. All papers are to be #12 font Times New Roman and Double-Spaced. Any paper not conforming to these standards will automatically be dropped one letter grade. Please see the BTS Turabian Style Guide for more information on turning in papers and assignments.

The BTS Turabian Style Guide and other resources are available on the BTS Writing Center webpage: <https://www.btswritingcenter.net/>

In addition, the Writing Center runs 2-3 Writing Workshops every semester. They are very helpful and highly recommended.

BTS Plagiarism / Generative AI Policy

In addition to the BTS plagiarism policy, BTS is implementing a new Generative AI policy. Unless clearly directed by the instructor, the students should submit their own work, independent of artificial intelligence tools. Use of generative AI to write papers or to write significant portions of assignments is considered an ethical violation of our Student Code of Conduct and to be a violation of general academic integrity, which could result in a zero on the assignment and/or a lowered letter grade for the course by the professor. If determined to be an egregious violation, it could lead to further sanctions administered through the Academic Committee, including expulsion from BTS.

Course Schedule:

Day One: Foundations

- Introductions: Syllabus and Outcomes
- Initial assessment of participant experience and expectations
- Prayer
- Biblical foundations for church planting.

Day Two: Research Methodologies

- Criteria for field selection
- Missiological principles
- Research approaches

Day Three: Strategy

- Exploring and developing models
- Assessing threats and opportunities
- Developing actionable proposals

Day Four

- Presentation and Critique of CP Proposals
- Assessment of individual callings toward kingdom Expansion
- Prayer

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to demonstrate punctuality and attend all class sessions. Any absences should be communicated to the professor beforehand. Students may miss up to three classes with impunity.

[NOTE: Standard BTS Attendance Policy is that students may not miss any more than three classes without a course penalty. However, given that this course is being offered in a four-day intensive, missing any more than 3 hours of class time would significantly jeopardize the possibility of passing. This course is designed to be participative, and the benefits of class discussion cannot adequately be compensated otherwise.

Class Policies and Procedures:

- BTS highly recommends using handwritten note taking methods in class and keeping computer usage to a minimum.
- Other electronics should be used sparingly.
- All assignments must be submitted by email by 11:59 (CDT/CST) on the due date.
- Late assignments will incur a -3 point deduction per weekday after the due date, except in cases of emergency communicated to the professor.
- Missed tests/exams may only be made up with an excused absence, preferably in advance of class. Excused absence tests/exams must be made up before the final day of the semester.

Video Conference Policies and Procedures:

- Please utilize the BTS “Best VC (Video Conference) Practices” information for the course.
- Laptops/Desktops are the preferred method of attending a video conference course. Information will be shared on the screen, so phones will be less useful.
- In Video Conference, it is preferable for the student to keep their video on (when possible) so that students and faculty may engage with one another. Extended periods of dark screen will result in follow-up and potential removal from class.
- Other electronics should be used sparingly.

GRADING CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

A to A-	B to B-	C to C-	D to D-
Correct spelling and grammar/punctuation	Minor errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation	Multiple errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation per page	Difficult to read due to English writing errors
Smooth writing that provides for effective and efficient reading	Writing is acceptable, but not as organized and coherent	Writing is not smooth, sometimes confusing and inconsistent	Writing lacks clarity, focus, structure, and is incoherent
Person and format are proper for assignment	Person and format are inconsistent	Person and format are not appropriate	Person and format are totally inappropriate
Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriately used, cited, and clearly supports main argument	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriate but need more depth and use of critical thinking	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are inadequate for main argument and do not reflect understanding	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are improperly used, over used, under used, or cited in error
Paper completely conforms to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper generally conforms to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper somewhat conforms to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper does not conform to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>

BTS Outcomes Evaluation

Please rank each outcome on a scale of 1-5

1: this outcome is not covered in this class

2: this outcome is only touched on in this class

3: this outcome is discussed in conjunction with class material

4: this outcome lightly assessed as part of course assessment (one assignment)

5: this outcome is fully integrated into the assessment of this course (multiple assignments)

1. Scripture: Students will effectively articulate the truth of Scripture and Scripture as truth, engaged with learning biblical knowledge and reformed principles of the supremacy of Scripture as God's word.
2. Reformed Theology: Students will be able to engage and reproduce the primary and essential elements of Reformed Theology.
3. Local Church: Students will be engaged in applied ministry projects in the local church
4. Wisdom: Students will grow in character; increasing in their demonstration of wisdom and its fruits.
5. Discipleship: Students will be able to understand and articulate the nature and importance of discipleship—both ordinary (means of grace) and extraordinary (biblical counseling).
6. Communication: Students will grow in the efficacy of their communication (articulation, teaching/speaking, and preaching—respective to various departments) both in content knowledge and rhetorical strategies.
7. Worldview: Students will demonstrate a growing ability to apply God's word to all spheres of life, evidenced through class discussion and other assigned assessments.
8. Leadership: Students will grow in their understanding of godly leadership and ability to lead others in service of the local church.

Outcome	Rank	Rational (one sentence)
Scripture	5	Scripture is foundational to church planting.
Reformed Theology	5	Reformed theology distinctly relates to church planting.
Local Church	5	Local churches are the goal church planting as well as themselves Great Commission actors.
Wisdom	5	Church planting calls for biblical wisdom and practical application of truth.
Discipleship	5	Making disciples is of the essence of church planting
Communication	5	The communication of the Gospel both to outsiders and insiders is how churches are planted.

Worldview	5	Worldview analysis and understanding is critical to communication across diverse cultures and worldviews.
Leadership	5	Godly, empowered, and gifted leadership is critically important for church planting.

NOTE: Church planting is not a matter of techniques or methodologies but is essentially a work of God's Spirit taking the witness of Jesus and the making of disciples to every culture and people group. As such, it necessarily includes all of the above-mentioned values.

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