

70 million college students on the planet.
You can change your campus to change the world.
Imagine Jesus showing up right where you live.



Student Church Planting

www.SCPX.org

ERIK FISH OCTOBER 2011

A change is underway on the campuses of America and the world. Students are responding to the words of Jesus, gathering with non-Christians, and experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit in residence halls, fraternities and sororities, apartments, student unions, Starbucks - any place students normally do life together. As students started following Jesus together, the result has been a growing movement of student-led churches. These churches look different than most conventional churches, but the basic scriptural elements and functions of the church are present. They lead students to Christ, baptize new believers, take communion, give to needs in the community, support their friends on mission trips, and seek to follow all the commands of Jesus together.

It seems today there is considerable debate in the body of Christ about "correct" church models. In the midst of debate, we do well to remember there is one Church, the corporate body of Christ, functioning through multiple expressions. For the student church movement, our value is not in choosing a model for the church to the criticism of others. Our value is to see Jesus known and worshiped in the places people do life together. For us to fulfill our vision of seeing at least one thriving student church spreading on and beyond on every university in the world, equipping students to reach their friends and gather together in simple expressions of church everywhere is a strategy we champion. We hope many others in the body of Christ are able to utilize this simple method with great fruitfulness for Jesus in the years to come as well.

I compiled this manual to assist you in mobilizing student-led churches at your university, whether you are a student, a campus minister, or a local church leader.

Spiritual moms and dads play a vital role in equipping, loving, and releasing students to reach their campus for Jesus. For many older leaders in this movement, this takes the form of growing a spiritual parent-type relationship with students and with the student churches. We speak into their lives as elder leaders. They learn how to be a family by being with us in our homes. They call us for advice. We host celebration/equipping gatherings and provide them with resources. But our goal as elder leaders is *to equip students to lead a new movement of churches for their generation.*

Universities are vital in our mandate to make disciples of every nation on earth (Matthew 28:18-20). With 70 Million college students worldwide, the harvest is ripe for a global student movement that spreads from campuses to every city and nation in our lifetime!

This manual is an introduction to help you take the next steps in student church planting. To hear updated stories, find additional resources, and connect with others who are mobilizing student churches, visit www.SCPX.org.

Every campus and nation in our lifetime,

-- ERIK FISH, SCPX CO-FOUNDER

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DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO REACH YOUR CAMPUS

Introduction: The call to become a fisher of men

"Follow me and I will show you how to fish for people."
Matthew 4:19

What are the characteristics of a disciple of Jesus? If you ask this question among Christians, you'll usually hear a list of very good character qualities and spiritual disciplines. The need for character can never be forgotten or diminished. However, a fundamental practice often has been misunderstood in our expression of Christianity.

Q. When Jesus invited Peter and Andrew to be His disciples and follow Him, what is the first skill He says He will develop in them?



Students hanging out with the bar crowds. After midnight, it's a whole different world - a world full of hurting people many Christians never encounter

In order to recapture the essence of how to fish for people, we must understand this principle: *There is no discipleship without evangelism.* Any student who wants to plant student churches on campus must have a fundamental commitment to effectively, creatively, lovingly, and passionately "catch" people and bring them into following Christ alongside them. Unfortunately, we sometimes tend to repeatedly use methods and strategies that aren't really effective. We use them over and over again, because maybe that's all we know. (Ok, we've all probably done it!) Some of us have learned how to survive within a Christian culture (Christian friends, Christian music, Christian conferences, Christian lingo, etc.) We need to remember how to follow Jesus to the lost again. As we follow Jesus, He will teach us how to fish for people!

"Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world."
John 17:18

Q. How does Jesus view our relationship to the world?

Q. What are some dangers and risks you may face when you are sent to those who don't yet follow Jesus?

There's a beautiful tension to following Jesus we must recapture regarding how to catch people by going *into* the world. We're called to be in the world, but not be like it. Sometimes we tend to think following Jesus means leaving lost people to join with other Christians and wait around to get to heaven. Maybe along the way, we hope to snag a few people to go there with us. We're taught to avoid sinners, worldly music, and worldly hangouts. Instead, we exchange these things for Christian friends, Christian music, and Christian hangouts. For certain, we need wisdom and discernment to know how to engage the world without becoming like them. But a quick look at Jesus' life shows some interesting contrasts with how we often think of Christianity. Jesus spent a lot more time at parties, BBQ's, and eating with sinners than many of us would be comfortable with today. Jesus is the ultimate example for us to follow today!

What if Jesus wanted you to follow Him to lost people on your campus? What if He wanted you to spend more time with sinners?

Take a moment to pray right now.

This isn't a hard, permanent commitment, but ask God right now:



A team of SCPX students head to Morehouse College in Atlanta.

“What amount of my time would you want me to try to spend with non-Christians each week?”

Write your impression here: _____

Many who have walked into the great adventure of following Jesus to catch the lost on their campus have discovered Jesus was *already* working among the group, waiting for one of His disciples to join Him in what He was already doing! Going to the lost is an adventure in getting *closer* to Jesus, not further away!

SENDING TEAMS

When Jesus begins to send out teams to “fish for people,” He demonstrates some great principles we can study and apply today.

Luke 10 is a strategic passage of scripture that speaks in detail on how Jesus told His disciples to reach a lost community. You may also find it useful to reference Matthew 9 and 10 as well. In these passages, some instructions may reflect unique strategies for the culture and people of the time. However, the principles still apply!



Where might Jesus be sending you?

Steps to Church Planting*

ACTIVITY: Deconstruct Jesus' instructions to the disciples in Luke 10:1-11 into a step-by-step process. This could look something like:

1. Form a team of people to go...
2. Pray for God to send more laborers...
3. Etc...

Write in the space below:

**The phrase “church planting” is never used in scripture. We’re commanded to preach the gospel and make disciples among the lost. However, in scripture we see new churches forming and being recognized in new areas where the gospel is preached and previously non-believing people are taught to follow Christ. We use the term “church planting” because we believe the process of preaching the gospel and making disciples among the lost results in new expressions of the church. Forming new believers into communities that follow Jesus together is a normal, healthy way the Church grows.*

ACTIVITY: Use the list of steps to church planting you just created to make a contextualized action plan for your own campus. This could look something like:

1. Katie and Ryan agree to go together to the athletic residence hall to reach out to athletes
2. They pray together every day for God to raise up athletes to labor in His harvest.
3. Etc...

ACTIVITY: Among the steps you outlined above, put an asterisk by the steps that are likely to be most difficult. What step are you currently stuck on? What do you need to do to get past that point?

WHAT IS CHURCH?

Yea! Students are Getting Saved! So, What's Next?

Activity: Answer the following questions in your own words:

Q. What images and words first come to your mind when you hear the word, "Church"?

Q. How might a very young group of new converts differ from more established churches that have been around awhile?

Q. What are the biblical requirements for us to call a new group of disciples a "church"?

Q. Read Matthew 16:15-18 and Matthew 28:18-20. In what ways might a church look differently when it flows from these scriptures as a guiding model?



I recently spoke to a large group of international campus ministry staff and presented the following scenario:

A missionary recently went to an unreached people group where there were no followers of Christ. Three people among this group came to faith in Christ. The missionary started discipling these new believers. They started telling other friends and family about Jesus. They started meeting together to pray and study the scriptures. Other friends also became Christ followers and were baptized in a local swimming pool. They continued to meet regularly to share meals, celebrate the Lord's Supper, worship and pray, and apply the scriptures to their lives.

I then asked the group, "What do you call a group like this?"

Almost unanimously, they replied, "A church!"

I then said, "What if I told you the previous scenario happened with a group of students in a residence hall? You've just witnessed the birth of a student church."



A gathering of simple, student-led churches at the University of Texas, Austin.

When student churches begin, we have a tremendous opportunity to nurture what God is doing by encouraging and equipping these local student leaders. If we teach them they first need to learn more, attend seminary, or adapt to our cultural forms of church that are not Biblically required, we could unintentionally quench what the Holy Spirit has begun among them. For some, it is quite a paradigm shift to begin thinking of how to mobilize a movement of student churches - but we can do it! Our heart's desire is to plant the gospel and bring the church where students live.

Can ordinary students in partnership with an extraordinary God reach the lost and start churches on their campus? With the help of the Holy Spirit and some good spiritual moms and dads, we say, "YES"!

We define a student church pretty simply. A student church is *a group of students who follow Jesus together*. They are committed to love God, love each other, and love the lost. Imagine what can happen on college campuses around the world with multiple thousands of students preaching the gospel and gathering together to worship, pray, reach the lost, love each other, share meals together, practice the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and encourage each other to love and good deeds. Imagine what can happen when students learn that following Jesus means modeling the gospel right where you live. Imagine what can happen when international students learn a model for making disciples and starting churches they can reproduce in any country of the world! We can change the nations by equipping students to do the work of ministry right on their campuses.

Every single expression of Jesus' church is vital for representing His body. For the purposes of reaching the college campus, we value simple, reproducible models for multiplying churches among lost students. They can be started by students, led by students, and grow among students who don't go to church...and spread beyond the campus.

Q: Read Acts 15:19-29. What were the basic requirements given to these young churches by the apostles? Why do you think this decision was so controversial and vital for helping new churches grow among new believers?

Q. What basic requirements might seem good to you to give to a young church of students who have recently become followers of Christ? List below.

Three Levels of Authority

To further help you understand the Biblical grounds for starting simple expressions of church among non-Christians the following exercise may prove helpful. This will help you create a grid for applying the scriptures to reach the lost and start simple churches that reproduce.

Jesus sent His disciples out to grow a multigenerational, multiplying family of people who experience, love, worship, and follow Him among every ethnic group on earth. (Matthew 28:18-20). These people are called His body, or His church. When we focus on His explicit commands, make disciples, and let the church grow among new communities who are learning to follow Jesus together, it helps us keep “the main thing the main thing.”

We make a distinction between three levels of authority in our movement.

Explicit Biblical Commands - These are non-negotiable, clear commands in scripture applicable to all people and cultures everywhere. (The Ten Commandments, commands of Jesus, etc.) Following the explicit commands of Jesus is where new churches must begin.

Apostolic Practices - These are the particular ways and precedents the apostles set as they taught people to follow Christ in the early expansion of the gospel and growth of the early church). Apostolic practices have authority, but our application of these apostolic precedents should never be exalted to the level of explicit commands given in scripture. “*All scripture is inspired by God...*” The Apostles give us examples for how to reach the lost, follow Christ, and grow churches in different regions. These are important for us to heed, to honor, to learn from, and sometimes to implement exactly. However, we believe the context in which apostolic practices were implemented should be taken into account.

For example, most (but not all) Christians would understand Paul’s directions to the Corinthians (I Corinthians 11) to keep women’s heads covered as not necessarily a binding commandment for all churches.) We can honor *the principle* without following the exact form through which the principle was implemented in the church at Corinth. The apostles followed Jesus to reach the lost and taught them to obey Jesus. They were uncompromising in the essentials (the apostles didn’t get thrown in jail and killed for compromising the truth). But they were also creative, adaptive, and followed the Holy Spirit’s leading as the gospel spread to new ethnicities and formerly pagan cities. **We should honor their example by doing the same in our generation among those who don’t yet know Christ.** We should not exalt specific Apostolic practices as they were applied in certain 1st Century cultural contexts to the same level of authority as the explicit commands of Jesus and the whole of God’s word. We should apply their wisdom, honor their example and scriptural writings, and follow the Holy Spirit’s leading *as they did in their day*. We’re not trying to water down the truth - we’re trying to allow the truth to spread to as many people as possible! Churches that are very young need spiritual milk, not the same food that



Praying over a freshman student after being baptized.

mature Christians eat. Eventually they will - but let's first see the Holy Spirit birth a lot of new spiritual babies and help them grow.

Current Church Traditions - these are the cultural adaptations we've either inherited or implemented in our modern Christian experience. Examples might be a particular denomination's way of taking communion, gathering together, requiring classes prior to being baptized, holding church services in a particular format, etc. These church traditions are not necessarily bad, and many times they're actually very good. They begin to hinder the gospel's expansion when they are given the same level of authority as the commands of Jesus, when they inhibit new people from following Jesus, or when they contradict explicit commands of scripture. These church traditions also inhibit the spread of the gospel when they are required among new groups of people who are following Jesus. When we impose our church traditions on people, we require them to have two conversions: 1) A conversion to Christ 2) A conversion to our particular church/Christian culture. When we do this, it slows down the influence and spread of the gospel.

Activity:

Q. What examples can you find in Scripture of explicit commands that apply to all people everywhere? (hint: Worship only God, Forgive, Don't look lustfully, Give, Pray, Love God with all your heart...)

Q. What examples can you find in Scripture of Apostolic practices?

Q. What examples can you think of modern church traditions that are neither found in the scriptures or in Apostolic practices?

5 PoP'S TO MULTIPLYING STUDENT CHURCHES

adapted from Luke 10¹

1. Practice of Prayer:

A. The first step to planting student churches is PRAYER. We must see what the Father is doing and join Him. We believe Acts 13:1-3 shows a good example for how to start sending out teams - it starts in prayer! *"One day as these men were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Dedicate Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.'"*

Before we send out any group of student church planters we encourage them to seek the Lord in prayer for His direction. *Prayer must precede planning.*

B. Practically, pray for God to bring you a partner. You can begin to talk to other Jesus followers you know who want to reach non-Christians on or near your campus. (Jesus sent out teams of "2" in Luke 10, and Paul almost always traveled with a team of 2 or more.)

*Note - the initial team is vitally important. Remember there is a temptation to gather Christians together and dilute your focus of going to the lost. Student church planting works best by sending small teams of student missionaries to reach the lost - not gather already-saved Christians together and call that a new church. Gathering *the wrong kinds of Christians* together and trying to plant student churches can be frustrating and severely weaken your efforts to reach the lost. As a general principle, student church planters need to:

1. Have a heart for the lost.
2. Understand the basic principles of student church planting (reaching new students for Christ and forming student churches among the lost).
3. Have godly character and an authentic relationship with Jesus.
4. Are open to coaching and correction from older leaders.
5. Have a love for other nations and ethnic groups.

C. Shortly after, start to pray over an area of students where you sense the Lord leading your team to start a student church. Begin to ask the Lord for the harvest to raise up student workers from within it. Ask the Lord, "What are the spiritual strongholds in the different areas of the campus?" Then pray for God to destroy the strongholds. *"For our battle is not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph 6:12)."*

We must pray it out to walk it out!



In a 24-7 prayer room at the first SCPx training experience in 2008. The Holy Spirit fell so tangibly, we were on the floor weeping, crying out to God for a new student missions movement.

¹ Thank you to Neil Cole, who first introduced me to the PoP's

Campus Crusade, possibly the world's largest Christian organization, was started by a 24-hour prayer vigil on the UCLA campus. Founder Bill Bright decided before he would try to plan, strategize or reach out to the students, he would first pray for them. He formed a 24-hour prayer chain with college students from his local church asking God to open a door at UCLA to preach the Gospel. A short while after this prayer vigil God opened a door for Bill to preach to a sorority house where half the students gave their life to Jesus and in the following weeks 250 students on campus were saved including the Student Body President, Top Athletes, and Yearbook Editor!

ACTIVITY: Many students have benefited from setting up a 24-hour prayer room before sending out teams to the campus. (See www.24-7prayer.com/prayer) What practical way can you facilitate prayer for your campus?

Q. Is there a specific group of students, residence hall, or department on campus you sense God calling you to pray for? How will you commit to praying for them?

2. Pockets of People:

A. The second step is to look for pockets of people who are un-reached with the Gospel. In Luke 10 Jesus sent out the 70 to specific towns and villages where he intended to go.

B. FOCUS on a specific STUDENT group

It is usually more effective to target one specific un-reached student group per team. The gospel will spread with the least barriers within a student group with common affinity to one another.² Different cultures and social groups often need new churches planted among them, right where they live.



Outside a sorority during Rush

Kinds of students...

- ❖ Specific residence halls/apartment complexes (imagine a student church on every floor of every residence hall)
- ❖ Greeks or Social Groups
- ❖ Sports Teams
- ❖ International Students
- ❖ Specific Majors
- ❖ Commuters
- ❖ Special Interest Groups (Clubs/Orgs)
- ❖ Music (Hip Hop/Grunge/Goth etc)
- ❖ Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Religious etc...

ACTIVITY: What are some student groups you can think of on your campus? Write below.

² Acts 10

C. If there are other receptive student groups in the area, organize more strategic teams to reach them.

Activity: What other students can you think of who could be sent to start a student church among a specific student group? Write below.



Powerful moves of the Holy Spirit can happen when students are sent to call people to follow Jesus on their campus. (Photo by Caryn Werner)

D. The aim is a "student church for every student group." We want to influence every un-reached student population's "entire" people group, not just a few individuals.

Note: *Avoid one-by-one extraction!* "Extraction" is what happens when you win a student to Christ, then subtly (or explicitly) encourage him/her to leave their social and cultural group to substitute a new "Christian" culture and set of friendships. Few "Christian" activities hinder the spread of the gospel faster than this practice. For certain, discipleship and relationships with other Christian communities are essential. Everyone needs spiritual family! Sometimes people do need a new social group, but the point is to be aware of *unnecessarily* extracting them. Remember, the gospel is able to transform cultures and whole ethnic groups from the inside out - not by pulling people out of their culture and ethnic/social groupings to add them to ours.

ACTIVITY: Where have you seen extraction practiced in Christian activities? Give some examples. From what you've learned so far, in what ways are student church planting principles different than extractational methods? Write below.

E. Watch to see where God is already at work among the people.

ACTIVITY: What non-Christians do you know who might be averse to attending campus ministry or conventional church events but might be open to learning about Jesus with a few friends? Write below.

G. As a student church planting movement we are specifically targeting pockets of students normally un-reached by other fellowships on campus. Don't try to recruit and win believers, but always focus and start with unbelievers. GO... to target un-reached student areas...

- ❖ Campus hang outs ...(bowling allies, library, outside gathering areas etc)
- ❖ Specific Residence Halls/freshmen
- ❖ Local Cafes ...(Starbucks, local food joints, etc)
- ❖ Fraternities/Sororities...(Greek events, parties, service projects etc)

- ❖ Sports teams...(sporting events)
- ❖ Campus clubs/organizations...(club events/meetings)
- ❖ Places where international students hang out...
- ❖ Student Union...(Cafeterias, student store, study rooms, etc)
- ❖ Department building for specific majors ...(Business, Arts, Medical, Engineering, RTF, English, Humanities etc)
- ❖ Local clubs, downtown, movie theaters, parks, shopping malls etc.

Our goal is not to bring students to church, but to bring church to students!

At Haskell Indian Nations University, a student began to feel God's burden for a particular residence hall where athletes lived. Instead of trying to invite them to a campus fellowship, he acted as a missionary. He began regularly hanging out there and started several conversations about Jesus. One night, he typed out scriptures on a paper, brought some snacks and gathered people together in the dorm lobby to discuss stories about Jesus. Two weeks later, a student in that dorm with a really dark past had a supernatural dream, pointing him toward God. A day or so after his dream, he discovered this student group discussing Jesus and he sat down with them. That night he gave his life to Jesus. Soon after, he went out to a local lake with three carloads of students and was baptized by another student! The entire dorm and football team was impacted by his story. Bringing the gospel and planting student churches makes space for the Holy Spirit to show up where non-Christians live!



A Native American celebration at Haskell University

Q. Which pocket(s) of students do you sense the Holy Spirit burdening you to reach on your campus? (Note: If you are a student and already live in a dormitory or residence hall, you might start by planting a student church right where you live - you just might be the person of peace to bring the gospel there!)

Q. What can you do practically to identify and understand the student culture or particular group of students on campus in order to reach them? (Hint: Talking with them and asking questions are a great place to start!)



Praying for a new follower of Christ who just got baptized.

3. Power of Presence:

A. As demonstrated in the story above, the third step is to simply show up! Over and over again I have seen God use people powerfully when they were simply willing to go to the lost and start talking with them - even if they didn't understand all the principles and "right" steps!

Jesus commands us to "Go and make disciples," not wait for them to come to us. As we pray and are led by the Holy Spirit to pockets of un-reached students, we can then show up and befriend those lost groups of students, looking for opportunities to minister to them.

B. One effective way of befriending a lost group of students is following the steps of *prayer, care, and share*. Sometimes practically caring for people is the best way to demonstrate the Gospel, especially to those who have major offenses toward Christianity. We can find out some of their needs and meet them.

(Ex: Free dinners, giving guitar lessons, helping International students as they learn English, etc). Our example for this is Jesus. He almost always addressed people's physical needs simultaneously with addressing their spiritual needs. Jesus' first recorded miracle even met people's practical needs -- turning water into wine at a party! So we *pray* for them, we *care* for them, AND we *share* with them the Good News of Jesus Christ!



Going camping - three student church leaders and ten students who didn't yet know Jesus. Fun!

One Korean student named David at UCLA felt God leading him to reach international students. One day he decided to simply show up at the international student center on campus. In an hour or two, he'd started friendships with students from over 10 nations. He also met a director of the center who encouraged him to apply for a position teaching English. The next semester, David taught a weekly English class to these international students. One day, he invited them to come to dinner at his house to eat, hang out, and learn about Jesus together. Almost every one of these students had never read a Bible or prayed to God before. A student church was birthed in his house, with them baptizing their first convert in his bathtub. Every week, they gathered to share a meal together, pray and worship, encourage each other, and read and apply the scriptures to their life.

One exciting thing to observe is that these international students learned a model for planting churches that is simple and reproducible in their home country!

C. The resources are in the harvest. Jesus sent out the 72 in pairs (Luke 10) telling them to take nothing with them. We should not be hindered in our student church planting even if we don't have a facility, large staff, or finances. The resources are in the harvest field; our job is to show up, preach the Kingdom, pray for the sick, deliver the oppressed and expect God to open a dorm, apartment, classroom, café, home, etc. for us to start a student church. Anywhere students do life together, it is possible to see a church planted there. And, often times, the best leaders come right from the harvest!

At the University of Texas in Austin, a student named Meghan began praying for her brother, Michael, who had been trapped in a lifestyle of drug use and atheism. Later that semester, she began reading Jesus stories with him. A few weeks later Michael began following Jesus and was baptized in a local lake along with several other students who started following Jesus. Later that



Meghan, a student leader from UT, baptizes her brother, Michael. The gospel can transform entire families!

year, Michael began a simple church with some of his friends who were still trapped in a lifestyle of drug use. They began meeting in a local "hookah bar" to read Jesus stories, worship, and pray.

The future leaders are in the harvest! (Photo by Caryn Werner)

Q. What are some practical ways you can begin to build relationships with your un-reached student group?

Q. What are some creative ways you can connect and share the Gospel in your pocket of students?

4. Persons of Peace:

A. A fourth step is to look for a person of peace or the student of peace within the pocket of students. This is someone who probably is not yet a Christian, but is open to Jesus and welcomes you as His messenger. Jesus told his disciples to go into the town and villages looking for the person who would welcome the message of the kingdom and open up their home. The student of peace is often critical, because they will be the indigenous leader to welcome you into that community of lost students.

A person of peace is...(student of peace)

- a. Receptive: They are spiritually open (though usually not yet following Christ) and friendly to you.
- b. Relational Connections: They know lots of students on campus and in the community.
- c. Reputation: They are people of reputation-- good or bad! (Cornelius/Samaritan Woman)
- d. Reborn: They are normally someone whom you eventually (though not always) win to the Lord.

In Kansas City, a group of SCPx leaders started a summer internship for college students with the KC Boiler Room. They spent the summer living in rhythms of prayer and worship, healing the sick, ministering to prostitutes, and planting simple churches. One day, they met a 15 year old named J'Tavius. J'Tavius invited them to come meet his family. Soon, the interns were eating at a BBQ with around 30 of J'Tavius friends and family. J'Tavius and his sisters soon started following Jesus, were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began leading their cousins to Christ. A simple church was started among their family. J'Tavius is an example of a person of peace - a person who welcomes you into their social network.



Students planting simple churches on campus can also do so in the urban core. J'Tavius opened the doors to his extended family.

Q. What other examples of persons of peace can you find in scripture? (Think about people who were highly influential in opening doors for the gospel to new areas and people.) Write below.

Q. If a student church planter already lives in a residence hall or is a member of a non-Christian social group, could *they* be the person of peace to welcome the gospel there? Explain your thoughts below.

Note: Don't make the person of peace concept complicated. Sometimes a person of peace is simply someone who is open to talking with you about Jesus, has other friends who don't know Jesus, and likes to hang out with you!

Q. What are the characteristics of a person of peace? Can you think of some possible persons of peace on your campus? What are some ways you can start interacting with them?

Q. What are some practical ways you can start gathering together with a person of peace and some of their friends? (don't just think about starting a church meeting, think about how to enter their world and teach them to follow Jesus.)

5. People of Purpose:

A. A fifth step often happens as the student of peace draws his/her friends to Christ and a student church is born. The uniqueness of this is that the church was born out of the harvest, is found among the harvest, and already visualizes it's mission to continue to reach the lost. The student of peace could have the new church meet in his/her home, apartment, dorm or wherever is convenient on or near campus. The student of peace might even become a leader in the developing church.

B. The key is once the new church is born on campus it is important for the student church planters to begin modeling & training new followers of Christ to serve the new student church so they can eventually continue on their own. The church planters expand their influence by equipping others to lead, and continuing to coach them and serve them. In this way, new leaders will start to take responsibility to lead the church and reproduce leaders of their own kind naturally.

Q. Once you lead a person to Christ and start meeting their friends, what are your next steps?

Q. What first steps would you teach a new believer or group of believers on campus?

SIMPLIFY

To make things a bit simpler, below is a brief summary one of the SCPX co-founders gives to students. Dr. Pam is the Director of Training for All Nations Family (www.allnations.us). Pam is an incredible church planting coach for students and has started multiplying churches in, let's just say, some not so easy places around the world.

We believe a successful strategy has to be biblical and simple. We have formulated it in five easy to follow steps: **Pray - Meet - Make - Gather - Multiply**

Pray. Pray fervently with God's heart for the people you are reaching out to. Pray to meet people by "divine appointments." Pray until you can weep over people. Pray fervently. Fast and pray. Walk and pray. Ask God to let you see what he sees and feel what he feels. It is in the place of prayer that God will reveal the unfulfilled purposes and broken covenants for the people you are reaching. Pray for a man or woman of peace to open the door the hearts and minds of people you are reaching. Pray for understanding and love of the culture. Pray for the word of the Lord to guide you and give you specific strategies to make disciples, train leaders and plant a church planting movement. (Luke 10:2)

Meet. Meet people where they are. Hang out with those who don't know Jesus. Get outside the Christian bubble. Resist the temptation and emotional need to focus on team issues that absorb your time and energy. As you pray, trust God to give you strategies for meeting people. Begin to build a network of relationships; what the Bible calls an *oikos* (literally a household). This network is the beginning of your future church plant. This network of relationships will become the future support system for those who accept Christ if they are disenfranchised by their family and friends. Build this network in faith that it will become a church for God in that place. (Acts 16:11-15)

Make. Make Disciples. Invest in people's lives. Don't wait for them to pray a prayer to accept Jesus or say they want to follow Jesus to invest in them as people. Disciple making is another way of describing evangelism, and of building meaningful relationships. As you build those relationships, seek to discern what God has in his heart for each person. (Matthew 28:18-20)

Jesus commanded us to make disciples. Disciple making is about introducing people to Jesus in such a way that they get to know him personally, and then learn to love and obey him. When it's the right time, teach people the seven commands of Jesus:

1. REPENT AND BELIEVE
2. BE BAPTIZED (IN WATER AND RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT)
3. LOVE - GOD AND PEOPLE
4. GIVE
5. PRAY
6. GATHER WITH OTHERS
7. GO MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS

Do you feel called to go to the nations? One of the best ways to prepare is to start right now - by planting simple churches on your campus like you will in an unreached people group overseas.



It

Do not hesitate to tell new believers the cost of following Jesus. Emphasize the privilege of going to other nations so God's mission is part of their spiritual DNA.

Gather. Gather those you meet who are spiritually open with other seekers for fun, hanging out, enjoying common interests, prayer, and study of God's word. Focus on the words and stories of Jesus. Don't wait for them to say they want to become a follower of Jesus to gather people into a community of friends. Gathering around a meal with others is one of the best ways to build community. Jesus said that where two or three gather in his name, he is with them. Practice "WWF" when you gather - Word, Worship, and Fellowship. This is "church" in its simplest, most essential form. Nothing more is needed to "be church." There is more that can be done to contribute to growing a healthy, vibrant church (see Acts 2:42-47), but gathering people together is the beginning of planting that church. (Acts 10:24)

Multiply. Plan for growth. From the beginning, train new believers to take responsibility for your meetings and outreaches. Stay in the background as much as possible to encourage others to grow and exercise their spiritual gifts. As soon as you reach 15-20 people, multiply. Start a new gathering. Give those you have been investing in assignments that will help you discern their giftings, strengths, and weaknesses. Build the community from the beginning, just like Paul did, by facilitating the development of indigenous leadership. (2 Timothy 2:2) Practice M.A.W.L! (Model, Assist, Watch, Leave)



SCPX students send out another student to a new campus.

Q. What models for church and disciple-making would be most effective to teach international students from nations that are closed to the gospel?

Q. If you had 6 months to spend with a group of students who recently started following Jesus, what skills would you teach them? What basic steps would you teach them about how to follow Jesus and make other disciples? List them below.

EVANGELISTIC TOOLS

Bringing the message of the kingdom

There are many ways to demonstrate God's kingdom to people. Many student church planters go out to pray for the sick, practice prophetic evangelism or "treasure hunts" (this is where you pray, make a list of clues the Holy Spirit gives you, then go out to find people who may be the "treasure" God is leading you to that day), or just talk with students they meet on campus. For this kit, I want to give you four simple tools to engage people that make space for the Holy Spirit to move through you. Whatever the means you employ to engage students with the gospel, the important thing to remember is **conversations usually precede conversions**. The following are a few helpful ways to create opportunities for conversation through which the Holy Spirit can use you to bring people into an encounter with Jesus.



Sharing the gospel informally on campus can be fun and natural.

It's as easy as making new friends to hang out with and letting your life spill into theirs!

1. Dinners With Sinners

"But when the teachers of religious law who were Pharisees saw him eating with tax collectors and other sinners, they asked his disciples, "Why does he eat with such scum?" - Mark 2:16

One of the greatest practices ever used through history to bring people into encounters with Jesus is unbelievably simple: **Eat with sinners**. Jesus did this a lot!

Brad McKoy, one of the SCPX leaders and founder of the Antioch Overflow Experiment in Pittsburgh, PA regularly asks students, *"Have you had your 'Dinners with Sinners' this week?"*

Eating with people opens up immeasurable opportunities to have meaningful conversations with people - and Holy Spirit encounters often follow.

After spending a few months on campus, meeting students and having spiritual conversations with them, I began to make a practice of eating with students at the university dining hall. One day, a university counselor walked over to me at my table (she wasn't a follower of Jesus yet). She introduced me to a student who was going through a difficult situation. The university counselor introduced me to the student by saying, "You need to ask him to pray for you because he has the power of God in him." I was blown away by how simple and powerful the act of regularly eating with people who don't know Jesus opened opportunities for the Holy Spirit to move.

-Testimony from a student church planter



Students at UCLA practice an evangelistic skit on campus. Fun and creative skits can be a great way to illustrate simple truths of the Kingdom and meet people who are spiritually open. Jesus told parables - that's what we do with evangelistic skits! Take note of your particular campus culture and decide if this strategy is culturally relevant for you.

2. Have Conversations

As Christians, we sometimes can get so nervous when we begin to think about evangelism. Many of us have come to think of evangelism as an activity whereby we build up our adrenaline and go out to “do our duty” of passing out tracks or invite people to a Christian outreach meeting. In reality, evangelism can be so simple and powerful when it flows through the course of normal encounters with people. *Most people I've ever led to Christ simply started with a conversation I turned toward talking about Jesus.* Sometimes these conversations led to power encounters with the Holy Spirit. As God's children, we can live “naturally supernatural” lives! The gospel is more powerful than you think it is!



SALT is a simple and effective tool for sharing Jesus in conversations I learned from the person who led me to Christ* when I was a student.

Remember SALT:³

- (S) Start a Conversation.** Simply meet people and start conversations with them. For goodness sake, be normal. People are just people, no matter how lost or spiritually confused they are.
- (A) Ask Questions.** Get to know them. Find out where they're from and what they study. To turn the conversation toward God, ask a few simple questions. A great starter question is, *“Have you ever had any experiences with Jesus?”* or *“Do you have a spiritual background?”*
- (L) Listen.** People don't care what you know until they know you care. People are almost always more willing to listen to you when you've taken the time to listen to them.
- (T) Tell your Story.** Ask, *“Can I tell you about my experience with God?”* Tell your story in a few minutes in simple, non-religious language. DO NOT focus just on external behavior changes. Focus on Jesus and how a relationship with Him has changed your life.

Often times after practicing this simple SALT method, I will ask the student, *“Do you want to get together again and discuss some stories about Jesus together?”* I'll then continue to build the friendship and lead them toward Jesus. Sometimes they are ready to start following Jesus right then! Listen for any nudges from the Holy Spirit and watch for how God may be working in their heart.

³ Thanks to Rice Brooks for turning me on to this simple tool. I've used it almost countless times with great results.

3. TELL YOUR STORY

One of the easiest and most effective ways to inspire people to encounter Jesus is to *tell your personal story of how Jesus has affected your life*.

Below are tips on how to share your personal story.

Once a conversation has turned to spiritual things you can usually find a way to naturally share an account of how you came to follow Jesus.

Your personal story with Jesus should contain at least three elements. You should be able to share these basics in about three minutes.

3 Parts of Your Personal Story with Jesus

1. Tell what your life was like before you began a relationship with Jesus.
2. Tell how you came to believe in and follow Jesus.
3. Tell what difference Jesus has made in your life.

Many people in the Bible shared their personal stories of encounters with Jesus to influence others. Some examples are the Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5:18-20), the Samaritan woman (John 4:28-30, 39), Peter and John (Acts 4:18-21) and Paul (Acts 9:1-22; 22:3-16; 26:9-18). You should read these passages to get some ideas about how to share your faith in this way.

Your testimony should be simple, focused on Jesus, and non-religious sounding (non-Christians who've never read the Bible don't understand phrases like "the Bride of Christ", "atonement", "covered in the blood", etc.) Although these concepts are important, you should use words that people who have never read a Bible can understand. Find practical ways to share the impact and truth of Jesus with words people can understand.

Don't worry if you don't have an amazing, supernatural, "Jesus raised me from the dead" kind of story. Many times it's the "normal" stories of how you experience Jesus in everyday life that speak most powerfully to people who don't know Him yet.

ACTIVITY: Write out your personal story of how you began following Jesus and how He has affected your life. Use the three elements listed above for your story. Write this so you can tell your story in about three minutes.



The number of creative ways to encounter people is infinite. It can be as simple as playing some music on campus and making new friends!

ACTIVITY: Go out (either right now or later this week) and ask someone one of the spiritual conversation starter questions. You might want to write down their answers. After you listen to them, if it seems appropriate, ask if you can tell them your story about your spiritual journey. How did it go? Was it easier or harder than you expected? Will you plan to talk with this person again?

Leading Someone to Jesus

Q. What methods of bringing the gospel to new people on your campus will you use?

Many times, after I have shared my personal story with someone, I can see something is stirring in their heart (though not always!). If I sense their heart is open, I'll ask them,

"Have you ever had an experience with God like what I talked about?"

Sometimes I'll simply ask them, *"Would you like to start your new relationship with God right now?"*

If they say yes, I simply explain who Jesus is and why He came. Then I lead them in a simple prayer to:

- 1) Repent (be sorry for living outside of relationship with God and ask God's forgiveness for the bad stuff you've done.)
- 2) Believe that Jesus came to forgive these wrongs (sins), He died, and rose again to restore your relationship with God.
- 3) Receive Jesus by faith - confess that Jesus is now Lord of your life and accept Him as the new leader of your life.

I then immediately start a follow up plan with them. We'll look at this on page 28.

Next, we'll show you a very simple tool we've used over and over to start evangelistic discussion groups that often grow into student churches.

4. The Seven Signs of Jesus

As you follow Jesus' strategy in Luke 10 you will begin with prayer, have conversations with people, identify a pocket of people on campus, begin to spend time with them, and start to inspire them to follow Jesus with you.

It really can be that simple. The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. One experienced student church planter says, *"If you want to plant churches, spend 75 percent of your time with lost people."*

We need to pray, go, and spend time with lost people doing things we would normally do (watching movies, drinking coffee, playing sports, studying, etc.) - but with them, on their turf.

What do you do when people start to show curiosity about Jesus? The **Seven Signs of Jesus** is a GREAT place to go next.

When a spiritual conversation opens up, I take a step of faith and ask them if they would like to simply discuss Jesus stories together sometime. If they just became a follower of Jesus, I'll ask them if they want to do it with some of their friends. Through this simple process, students have started



Students learned to use the 7 Signs of Jesus tool at SCPX Atlanta. HBCU's (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) are vital to the future of America and the world.

discussion groups using the **7 Signs of Jesus** that have resulted in students saved and student churches planted. *(We learned this tool from someone else, though we're not sure who to give credit to.)*

THE 7 SIGNS OF JESUS

The "Seven Signs of Jesus" is a simple, yet powerful, evangelistic Bible learning method for reaching non-Christians. The Apostle John said, "...these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31). In the book of John there are seven miracles or signs Jesus performed:

1. Changing water into wine (John 2:1-11)
2. Healing the royal official's son (John 4:46-54)
3. Healing the paralytic at the pool (John 5:1-18)
4. Feeding over 5,000 with fish and loaves (John 6:1-14)
5. Walking on the water (John 6:15-25)
6. Healing a man born blind (John 9:1-41)
7. Raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-46)

The purpose of these miracles or signs is for those who read them to believe that Jesus is the Christ. Each time I meet with a non-Christian student or a new group of students, we read one of the passages in John where Jesus performs a miracle. I ask four simple questions:

1. What does this tell us about the way people are?
2. What does this tell us about what people need?
3. What does this tell us about what Jesus is like?
4. How can we apply this to our lives?

If I'm meeting with non-Christians, I usually don't pull my Bible out of my backpack or expect them to have one to read along with (non-Christians usually don't have one in their dorm room). I print out the passage of scripture on pieces of paper and hand them out so everyone can read along and get involved.

Each person in the group takes turns reading a few verses until we finish the story. Then we discuss each of the questions above.

Usually when students use the Seven Signs in an evangelistic Bible Study, non-Christian students begin to be fascinated with Jesus and want to learn more. Oftentimes, people become followers of Jesus very quickly. We read the story, ask the questions, and let them discuss together the wonderful person Jesus. We watch for how students' hearts are responding to the Holy Spirit and follow up with them through the following week. It is that simple.



of

It's important to remember that in these types of meetings, I'm not telling everyone what the stories mean. I'm seldom "preachy" with this brand new group that is forming. I will be involved in the discussion and will sometimes give an exhortation when I feel the Holy Spirit prompting me. However, I'm trying to get **them** to read the scriptures and let the Holy Spirit give them insights. This method of reading and applying the scriptures together in a group forms a precedent for the group as it grows into a student church.

Time and time again, I'm amazed at how powerfully the Holy Spirit will speak to non-Christians who are reading Jesus' words for the first time.

Below is a testimony about a student church starting in a fraternity, using the **7 Signs of Jesus** tool:

I built a relationship with the president of a local fraternity. (I walked into the house, introduced myself and started to get to know him. I asked him if there were any guys in his fraternity who would want to start a spiritual community (student church) in their house that they led. I would start the initial meetings, then soon back out and help him choose leaders, who I would offer to coach and mentor FOR FREE. ☺) He was really open to this, so we set up a time to try it out for an evening and see who was interested.

On the day I was supposed to go into the fraternity and begin, I battled depression and discouragement all day. An hour before the meeting I got alone with God and prayed. That helped build my confidence a bit.

Finally, I went into the fraternity at 7pm to start the student church. I met with the president of the house. I wanted him to gather people, not me, so I sat out on the patio and waited as he spread the word around the house that anyone curious about God should come. Seven guys came out and we sat on the porch talking.

I had chosen to lead an inductive study on the 7 Signs of Jesus. I wanted to give them a simple model for examining the scriptures that every one of them could reproduce themselves.

We read the story from John 2 - Jesus turning water to wine. (This is a great one for fraternities). Then we discussed the four simple questions.

I was amazed at the insight and revelation these fraternity guys discussed. Maybe the Holy Spirit really can be people's teacher if we give Him space to do so!

Here is a paraphrased version of some of our discussion points:

"I've never read the Bible before, so I'm not sure if this is right, but it seems to me like the Master of Ceremonies really screwed up. But Jesus didn't take the credit or embarrass the MC. He had the servants report to the MC and give him the wine first, so the MC could present it to the rest of the party. That's encouraging to me to think that maybe Jesus doesn't want to embarrass me for my mistakes."

"Wow, these people were really in a jam. They were probably really worried and stressed out. I guess the thing to learn is that maybe Jesus can help us when we're stressed out. That's cool to think that Jesus actually stands ready to help with the problems I have."

"It seems like Jesus' mom believed He could do something to help, so she told Him about the problem. It seems to me like Jesus responds more when we believe in His power first and ask Him to help."

"Jesus is really dependable when we have problems."

"Jesus wasn't just a normal person. He had miracle powers."

"Jesus liked to be where people were - at the party."

I am humbled at how powerfully God moves when we bring His word to where people live and let His word speak!

In the middle of the meeting, one of the guys was so excited about what was happening, he spoke up and said, "Guys, I don't know why I'm saying this, but I suddenly have this feeling that this is going to be the smallest meeting we're going to have all year. This thing's going to explode."

This group continued and eventually started a second group to accommodate more people who wanted to get involved.

You will be amazed how much insight, knowledge, and revelation non-believers will receive in these student church plants as they're given opportunities to examine the words of Jesus. It is simple, yet powerful and life transforming. And anyone with a willing heart can do it!

PAGAN.FREAKY.WHACKED

STUDENT CHURCHES AREN'T FOR RELIGIOUS PEOPLE. THEY ARE FOR THE NON-RELIGIOUS!

When Jesus heard this, he told them, "Healthy people don't need a doctor - sick people do. I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners." (Mark 2:16-17)



I often feel sad when a religious person finds their way into a young student church plant of recently saved students. (By "religious" I mean someone who has a kind of know-it-all attitude and carries a bit of pride about their religious background and experience.) Their reaction is often to dominate conversation or tell everyone exactly what these scriptures mean. They sometimes start inviting people in the group to "real" churches. It makes these non-Christians feel stupid and they get reminded about why they aren't Christians in the first place. You have to be tactful and respectfully pull these religious people aside. Share with them that the purpose for this group is not for people who are already in a church or following Christ, but rather for people who don't know Christ to discover the power of His Word.

One key we teach those in these groups is that the best way to learn what has been studied is to immediately teach it to someone else. I will sometimes challenge those in the group who have come to Christ to share with their lost friends immediately, teaching them what they learned with me that week. This instills in them immediate obedience and the value of multiplication from the very beginning. Every time we meet together, I will ask them, "Did you obey the teaching and teach what you learned in the last gathering to others?" Then I will have them practice facilitating new studies to prepare them to teach it to their friends (2 Tim 2:2). This keeps them on the evangelistic edge and a disciple-maker from day one.

Q. What is God stirring in your heart at this point of the Student Church Planter's Kit? What questions do you have or challenges you're thinking about?

HOW TO FOLLOW UP A NEW BELIEVER

I often tell students in our training sessions, “*New babies need lots of care!*” If you lead a person to Christ, they are like a newborn spiritual baby. It is not someone else’s job to disciple the person. *It is your job.* The first 48 hours of a new believer’s life are the most crucial. If a mother gives birth to a baby, she doesn’t leave the baby unwashed or uncared for. In the same way, when someone is saved through your evangelistic discussion groups or in any other way, it is your responsibility to follow up with them to help them get going. If our new converts gain nourishment and strength in their earliest days, it prepares them to grow healthy and strong. In my opinion, small, intimate gatherings are often more effective places to start this discipleship process than large-scale meetings are! “Like newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word.” (1 Peter 2:2)

Below is a simple but radical 10-step process I regularly use to follow up with a person who has just begun following Jesus. Many on different campuses practice a similar process and have witnessed not just people praying one-time prayers for salvation, but true movements of disciples multiplying disciples. The steps below are not the only follow-up method, and they can be modified and changed to fit into your context.

1. **Faith in Jesus and Repentance** - Rom 10:9, Ephesians 2:8-10, and Acts 2:38
Make sure they have placed their faith in Jesus rising from the dead and confessed Him as Lord (Leader) of their life. Lead them in a prayer of repentance. Repentance literally means, “to change your mind”. Repentance is an internal change that produces a change outwardly as we receive Christ.
2. **Water Baptism** - Acts 2:38
Baptize them in water as soon as possible.
3. **Holy Spirit Baptism** - Acts 2:38
Pray with them to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Paul says we should, “Eagerly desire spiritual gifts.” (1 Corinthians 14:1). Gifts from the Holy Spirit are to be sought for, not passively accepted. We do this by simply leading them in a prayer to ask for the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13). Then we lay hands on them and pray for the Holy Spirit to fill them.
4. **Cast out Demons**- Mark 16:17
Sometimes people also need deliverance from demonic oppression (though not always). This is especially common if someone has been traumatized or has a background in worshiping false gods or spirits, witchcraft, heavy drug use, etc. Casting out demons was a common occurrence in Jesus’ ministry. The Holy Spirit will give you discernment if someone needs further deliverance. Have them repent specifically for involvement in any demonic activity. Also have them forgive anyone they may be holding bitterness against. Then command any demons to be gone in Jesus’ name. Don’t go “looking for” demons. If



Patty survived an unsuccessful abortion attempt when she was in her mom’s womb. She grew to become a beautiful artist and dancer. Last year, Patty met a student from the Arizona student churches and encountered the love of her heavenly father. She told a crowd of onlookers her story at a hotel pool where she was recently baptized.

they are present, the Holy Spirit will give you discernment to handle it. You don't have to yell loud or act goofy. Just use the authority of Jesus' name He gave you.

Note: Deliverance is a start, but is not necessarily a "cure all" for emotional and psychological trauma they may have faced. If they need further professional help, then by all means encourage them to do so.

5. **Pray and speak prophetic blessings over their life.** - Deuteronomy 28:1-6, Acts 19:6, I Corinthians 14:3

Pray God's blessings over the new convert's life and have others release any prophetic words of destiny, strength and encouragement. Prophetic words don't have to be audible words from God. The Holy Spirit may lead you to speak specific things. Otherwise, just speak words of encouragement, hope, love, and blessing over them - the Holy Spirit will use our words.

6. **Get them a Bible** - 2 Timothy 3:16-17

A great place for new believers to start is by reading two books: Genesis and one of the gospels.

7. **Immediately begin a follow-up plan** - Acts 2:42

Begin a discipling relationship with them. The first seven days of a new believer's life are most crucial. Challenge them to meet every day with you for the next 7 days to pray, read Jesus' Words, and get encouragement in their new life with Jesus. This time can be vital for solidifying an authentic relationship with a new disciple.

8. **Establish their commitment to meet regularly with you for prayer, encouragement and coaching in their new life in Christ.** (Matthew 28:18-29)

I tell every new convert, "*Christians go to heaven. Disciples change the world!*" I ask new disciples to make 5 commitments:

1. Spend time with Jesus everyday.
2. Spend time with me regularly, building our relationship and letting me help them grow as a leader for Jesus.
3. Live sexually and morally pure
4. Gather with other disciples (eg: in a simple church)
5. Make other disciples - share with others what you are learning and lead them to Jesus.

Remember, discipleship is not just transferring information - it is transferring life and values from one person to another. You are investing in a deeper relationship with the person you are discipling, and vice-versa.

A D-Group (aka LTG) has been a very effective tool for many students. A D group is a simple group of 2-3 gender specific people meeting once a week for one hour. They hold each other accountable to reading Scripture weekly, confessing known sin, and praying for the lost each time they meet. We'll explain how to do this on the next page

9. **Coach them to tell their personal story with Jesus-** Revelation 12:11

Immediately, teach new converts to give their testimony--"before, how, after they came to Christ." - Try to visit 10 of the new disciple's friends where they share their personal story.

Some of these may become new followers of Jesus who the disciple can start a follow up plan with!

10. **When applicable, start a new simple church!** - Acts 2:46, Acts 16:13-15, 40
Sometimes a new believer is able to win other friends to Jesus very quickly, or start a brand new evangelistic discussion group (**using the 7 Signs of Jesus**). Sometimes this new group of people can mature into a student church. Make sure they continue in interdependent relationships with you (as their discipler) and with other friends who are moving toward Jesus. The Biblical pattern is for believers to gather together with other believers (Hebrews 10:23-25) while they continue to reach the lost for Jesus.

D-Groups (Discipleship Groups)

A D-Group is a simple gathering with two or three people for encouragement, accountability, and discipleship. It is easy to do because the only tool used is the Bible.

“You have heard me teach many things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. *Teach these great truths to trustworthy people who are able to pass them on to others*” (2 Timothy 2:2 NLT).

A,B,C Format - It's very important to follow the pattern called “ABC” (call it anything you want to call it). Divide the D-Group meeting into one-thirds and faithfully stick with the purpose of each one-third. The D-Groups help lay the foundation for very basic discipleship. The format is easy to learn and easy to follow, and it is also very transferable



D-Groups can meet anywhere!

A - Ask (accountability leading to short verbal worship and praying for each other)

1. Ask, “What is one thing you are thankful for?” Then, “Let’s take time to thank God with short prayers of thanksgiving”.
2. Ask, “Do you have a need to share or a sin you want to confess?” Then, “Let’s pray short prayers for each other”.
3. Ask, “What did you learn from last weeks’ D Group and how are you applying it to your life?”

B - Bible study - Use the discovery Bible approach

1. Read. Ask someone to read the passage of Scripture.
2. Restate. Ask someone else to restate it in their own words. Ask the rest of the group to add anything that was left out - without lots of discussion.
3. Reflect. Take 3-5 minutes to reflect in silence. No discussion first.
4. Relate. Share one thing each person has from the passage. Each one share once before anyone shares twice.

C - Commit - to pray and obey

1. Pray. “Who are three people you can share this truth with?”

1.

2.

3.

“Let’s pray for them now in groups of two”.

2. Obey. “How will my life change as a result of what I learned here today?”

3. Practice - It is crucial to spend a few minutes at the end of each session practicing how the truth that was learned will be shared with the three people you are praying for.

Feel free to adapt this method to your group! Make sure that you keep the three parts there - or else a major function of church life will be left out. However, if the particular method isn't working for you, then change it. This is a suggestion on how many groups look - not how they must look.

HOW TO LEAD STUDENT CHURCH GATHERINGS

Throughout history and in different cultures, the style of church gatherings, the way people structure themselves and the models of worship they use vary widely. There is one gospel and one Church. The gospel never changes: our cultural expressions for how we may gather together as churches do. It is vital to present the truth of the gospel - but it's not vital to protect our cultural expressions for how we do church.

You may be wondering, "So what do you actually do in a student church gathering?" It is very simple: we simply try to do what the early church did.

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts 2:42

"How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification." 1 Cor 14:26

As seeking students become followers of Jesus in an evangelistic discussion group, and are baptized, they can then begin to grow as disciples and the group can naturally develop into a new church. As the new church matures and grows, it follows a Biblical New Testament model of a house church. On some campuses, mature believers will first start a student church with other believers who have a vision for planting student churches among the lost. As they experience student church together, each member goes out to share the Gospel and start an evangelistic group among a pocket of unreached students. As these new evangelistic groups are started and become new churches themselves, the process often repeats itself. Everyone is in a student church; everyone can start a new student church among the lost! On many campuses, we have seen larger churches send out students to share the Gospel, start evangelistic Bible studies from scratch and start new student churches straight from the harvest.

So what do student church gatherings look like? The format of **WWF (Word, Worship, Fellowship)** is a simple format we've used repeatedly to build up a new student church. *Remember, the key is not the method or format.* Rather, a key is following the Biblical pattern, adapting it to your own context and, most of all, listening and following the leading of the Holy Spirit in each gathering.



Students practice simple church at SCPX India, 2010

3 Vital Parts of Every Student Church Gathering Word, Worship, Fellowship

Whenever a group meets, we follow a simple format of Word, Worship, and Fellowship. These aren't the *only* things you can do at a student church gathering, but they do represent a basic template that should be present:

Word: Students each take turns reading through scriptures. If students don't yet have a Bible, printing scriptures out on a piece of paper is helpful. Reading through the Creation story (Genesis 1-3) or stories and commands of Jesus is a great place to start.

Always try to make the Word time interactive, not dominated by only one person talking. Discuss:

What does this tell us about God?

What does this tell us about people?

How is the Holy Spirit speaking to me through this?

Who else needs to hear this?

Remember - many students have never read a Bible before. In the beginning of the growth of a new church, they need to learn the basics of following Jesus and fall in love with the process of how the Holy Spirit will speak to them through God's word. We don't want to wow students with our knowledge - we want them to develop a love for Jesus and believe they can change the world around them as they immediately start following Him. I'm continually amazed at how powerful God's word is when we put it in front of people who are hearing it for the first time!

At the end of the word time, we go around the room and ask, "*Who do you know who needs to hear about what you've learned from God today?*" **Taking action** is an essential part of the Word time. This makes the word portion of the church gathering something students learn to immediately start sharing with others.



Eating together is a great practice to do at a student church. Everyone loves food!

Worship: Worship is “*setting your mind’s attention and heart’s affection on God.*” Worship can take a variety of forms. The important thing to remember is to facilitate some activity where students can worship. If you don’t have a worship leader it doesn’t mean you can’t worship. Think creatively. Go around the group and let those who want to give thanks to God. Sing praises *accapella* or sing together accompanied by a worship CD. In a new student church you may sing only a few songs, whereas in a more mature student church, this time for praise and worshipping the Lord may go on for extended times. You don’t have to pull out Hillsongs, Misty Edwards, or Jason Upton CD’s to have worship (as much as we personally love them). Try to use music that fits the culture of the people you are with. At a student church plant at a Native American university, students began to write their own worship songs using Native drums and traditional music forms.



Worship does not always have to involve music, either. The last simple church I started, nobody could play an instrument. I worked with one of the most mature disciples and he prepared a form of worship I’d never seen before. He would begin by saying a simple phrase of praise/worship to God over and over, then invite the group to join in. This went on for several minutes as new believers began to experience God in worship for the first time. Very cool.

Other aspects of worship: Communion, Giving, and Prayer

Sometimes students **celebrate communion** together as an act of worship and remembering Jesus. Also, worship is expressed in our **giving**. It is appropriate to have an outlet for giving since giving is an essential expression of our love for God and a way to support the works of the church and needs in the community. Supporting those in need and carrying each other’s burdens whenever feasible is part of our duty. On some campuses, students have taken offerings for students who are experiencing financial difficulty or who are being sent from the student church on a mission trip to a new campus or overseas.



Students take turns praying for each other. This simple practice has led to innumerable encounters with the Holy Spirit. It is an essential part of the life of a student church.

Lastly, **Prayer** is part of worship. This time of worship flows naturally into a time of **prayer**. Spend some time praying for the campus and praying for each other. Many times, students will take turns praying for different individuals in the room, speaking prophetic encouragement and blessings over them. On numerous occurrences I have seen these times of personally praying for individuals lead to powerful Holy Spirit encounters. When this happens, I’m continually reminded, “*Wow, this is an aspect I hope we never lose in the church - people encountering the Holy Spirit and receiving loving, encouraging prayers from others in the church.*” This aspect of taking turns praying for each other has become a strong part of the culture and practices of fruitful student churches.

Fellowship: Church without authentic relationships is just a meeting! Fellowship is the characteristic of a church that reflects people's relational connectedness. A church is a group of people who are relationally connected with each other and follow Jesus *together*.

A great way to facilitate fellowship is by **eating together!** In the early church, they called this the "breaking of bread." Eating together produces an informal atmosphere, making it easy for people to share their lives together. (Remember: students love food!) Regularly, in student church gatherings during our times of eating, we will also take communion to remember the reason of our coming together - it's all about Jesus! During times of fellowship, students will often make other plans to hang out together during the week, plan fun events, and find ways to share life together.



Authentic relationships are the fabric of a healthy church

A Safe Place to Try

I've noticed in the student church movement that many times these informal atmospheres at a simple church provide a **safe place** for young Jesus followers to practice ministering to others in the power of the Holy Spirit with minimal fear of failure. We have worked diligently in our movement to produce a culture where it's ok to fail. We become more fruitful with practice! We've seen people healed, accurate prophetic words and words of knowledge, etc. And we've seen several times of, "Well, good try...keep trying!" ☺

ONE LAST DISTINCTION

A student church is not just a gathering; it is a spiritual family of people we care about, people who follow Jesus and do life together as a 24/7 community. Everyone depends on God and one another, and everyone gets to really know each other--the good, the bad and everything in between. It is a small church, but still a real church. It is as real as a big church with a building and a thousand people. Both are good and both are church.

Bigger is not necessarily better -- small things can make a big difference!



A Taiwanese student baptizes another student at a student church gathering.

HOW TO LEAD A STUDENT CHURCH NETWORK

Many people ask how a network of student churches functions as they grow and multiply. Can conventional churches send students to start student churches? Can campus ministries start student churches? The answer is yes!

We have worked with local churches (mega-churches, community churches, traditional churches) as well as parachurch campus ministry organizations to help them plant networks of student churches with their students on campus.

What has begun to happen on campuses where multiple student churches have been grown is that these smaller churches often regularly gather together for corporate prayer, celebrating stories of what God is doing, and providing a place for older leaders (campus ministers, older spiritual fathers and mothers, etc.) to encourage and exhort them. These student churches have grown to become a spiritual family of simple churches on their campus. In essence, they are a church composed of simple churches.



The following definition, originally adapted by Jaeson Ma from Larry Kreider's book, "House Church Networks", is a good illustration of what a student church network can look like on many campuses and cities in our ministry network.

Student churches are quite different from traditional community and mega-churches. There is no need for a large church building, because each student church is a fully functioning church itself meeting as a small community of 10-20 believers.

Students can meet in a variety of places including dorms, apartments, homes, student union, classrooms, places of business, cafeterias, skate parks, shopping malls, parks, cafes, anywhere that students meet.

A team of student leaders (elders) leads each campus church, while first being mentored by a spiritual father or mother. Their responsibility is to serve the student church (as a team of student elders). Each student church is committed to network together with other student churches on their campus and in the city or region to keep them from pride, exclusiveness, and heresy. These new student churches in their area can meet together once every month or so for corporate celebration, prayer or outreach. But this monthly celebration is not the main focus. The student churches are true churches, not just Bible studies or even cell groups. They have elders, they collect tithes and offerings, and the leadership is responsible before the Lord for the souls of the people in the church (Heb 13:17).

Additionally, these young leaders are intent on the reproduction of these student churches. These student churches will have small cells for training new leaders and to give every believer the opportunity to minister. Each time student leaders are sent out to plant a new student church, they will stay connected by joining a leadership cell for ongoing mentoring. They will have regular "retreats" for all the student churches to come together and encounter God in foundational truths, inner healing and deliverance, etc. Also, instead of constructing a church building, when the student church or place where they are meeting is outgrown, a new student church is planted. These networks of student churches will be governed by apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors

and teachers in the region who will spiritually parent and train the elders of each student church to shepherd the churches and do the work of the ministry (Eph 4:11). Equipping bases will be set up in each region to train leaders and provide a safe place to connect with the larger spiritual family. Also, as these student church networks grow, they multiply from the campus and into the city. Graduated students will start church networks in workplaces, homes, neighborhoods, among the poor, into every area of society creating multi-generational networks of churches from the campus, to the cities, and to the nations!"

Raising Leaders is Essential

In order to grow a network of disciple-making simple churches, practice M.A.W.L. (Model Assist Watch Leave) - *I DO, YOU WATCH, WE DO WE WATCH, YOU DO I WATCH, YOU DO!*

At one university, an older leader spent 6 months training new disciples in the basics of being a disciple and making disciples. (MODEL) We gathered weekly as a simple church to pray for our campus and practice Word, Worship, and Fellowship. Each of these students made a list of other students they were praying for to become followers of Jesus. Some of these new people started following Jesus with them. Increasingly, I asked different disciples to lead a different aspect of the simple church. (ASSIST) After 6 months, I sensed it was time to let them lead. (WATCH) I began to move to the sidelines as more of a coach. When the time was right, I gave responsibility for this young church to these new disciples. We celebrated this transition and their growth in the Lord over the last year. There were tears of joy as these new followers of Christ thanked me and began to plan together to implement their vision to see God bring new people to Christ. (LEAVE).

Note: *An important thing to remember is when you "leave", you are not leaving the relationship - you are simply raising up new leaders whom you continue to influence as they reach their area for Christ. Jesus raised leaders and handed off responsibility to them. The apostle Paul did the same. We should too!*



Praying over a student. Often times in our movement, if we can't find a pool of water to baptize a new believer, we will improvise in the nearest dorm shower! Imagine the impact this has when lots of other students around the dorm gather to watch this powerful event!

Activity: Check out the short book of Titus. What principles do you see for the natural growth process of churches in a previously unreached people group? How would these principles apply in developing student leaders to serve a church composed of students?

At Arizona State University, a student church formed and began branching out to plant other simple churches among non-Christian student groups around campus. After about a year, it became evident that five core student leaders were the ones naturally developing as elders of this student church network. We sent older apostolic team leaders to visit this student church and lay hands on these student elders. They recognized the leadership gifts God was giving to this young church through these faithful, responsible student elders.

Q. What would be godly characteristics to look for in appointing student leaders in a student church (or network of student churches)? Write below.

In the kinds of churches we are discussing, students learn from the start how to reach their friends, depend on God and each other, and seek coaching and counsel from older leaders. They don't know any better than to follow Jesus and expect Him to save their friends, family and ultimately the nations!



Q. What is your role in this new student church start? Explain how you would M.A.W.L.? (Model, Assist, Watch, Leave).

Q. What practical plans would you make to continue equipping a network of churches like Paul and others did in the New Testament?

In Central America, a major campus ministry realized there was no way full-time campus staff workers could reach the hundreds of universities represented in their nations. They also began to see there was nothing Biblically that should hinder them from planting churches. (This has been a stigma for parachurch ministries in the West). They gathered full-time campus workers from several nations to learn how to send students out to plant student churches. A few weeks later, one campus worker had already found three persons of peace!

Equipping students to plant simple churches honors God's heart for the world.

Full-time campus workers and older leaders are vital. But if we rely on full-time ministry workers solely to manage and lead all the different ministries, we'll never have the capacity to reach the 70 Million college students of the world, currently studying on 25,000 universities. The future leaders of the nations are studying on the campus. ***We must equip students to lead and multiply disciples as a lifestyle they can carry beyond the campus!*** We can greatly multiply our influence for the gospel by equipping and sending students to grow simple churches! We don't lose our influence in their lives - our influence actually increases!

A FINAL WORD

As much of the New Testament shows us, growing churches in new areas is not without it's challenges. Though we can utilize principles, nothing will take the place of our need to depend on the Holy Spirit and figure out many things as we go. We must be flexible, be willing to make some mistakes, and place our faith in God as we step out to try.

This Student Church Planter's Kit was written as an introduction to help you get started. My prayer is this kit has given you some basic tools and understanding in how to partner with the Holy Spirit to start a student church movement on your campus that will spread from the campus to the nations! For more resources, stories, or to connect with others from the SCPX family, please visit www.SCPX.org.

We've got a whole world to reach for Jesus - let's do it!

--Erik Fish

APPENDIX

Prophetic Vision

Neil Cole, author and church-planting leader, wrote about a vision for what we believe God intends to do with the student-led campus church-planting movement:

- *New songs will be written that express the heart and voice unique to this movement. A book of songs will be published... Prophets and teachers will write the bulk of the songs. Songs will be free to the masses and passed electronically spreading the heart and voice of this unique movement without boundaries...freely you received and freely you will give.*
- *A magazine (printed, electronic or both) will be published and it will carry the stories of what God is doing and also the apostolic/prophetic voice of the movement.*
- *All these works will be easy because the Spirit will hand select those who are to do the work and these people will have been waiting their whole life for the opportunity.*
- *This movement will not form a single organization or denomination, but many, all carrying the same DNA and all working together in interdependence... blessing one another, never in competition, always in unity.*
- *Old wineskin ministries will be blessed by this movement but will not carry the movement.*
- *This movement will be marked by transformed lives and will grow from new life coming from the harvest.*
- *Prayer will continue before the throne of God 24/7 in the same spirit of the Moravians.*
- *A new missionary movement will be birthed sending many missionaries out, but this will be a true Student "Volunteer" Movement, in that these missionaries will be sent into the various domains of society to work there and be the Daniels, Shadrachs' Meshach's and Abednegos of our world. They will work for the Lord of the harvest and they will get their support from him through their work...a laborer is worthy of his wage. These missionaries will not do their work for money but for Jesus.*
- *This movement is not about the campuses, it will start there but it will not stop there. This move of God will not just touch the campuses of our world, but bring the blessing of God's kingdom and His command to all the domains of society. New creative arts will emerge glorifying God; new discoveries in technology and medicine will come from the people of God. There will not just be a rise in spirituality but in understanding and in wisdom of our entire society because of what God is birthing here.*
- *Millions of lives will be saved in seen and unseen ways by the people of this movement. Terrorists will be saved before destruction is afflicted, diseases will be healed and also cured, wars will be ended, abortion will eventually end because the hearts of fathers and mothers will return to their children...this is a movement of doves and peacemakers.*
- *The enemy will not know what to do with you. Your only head will be Jesus, your only desire will be Jesus, and your only provider will be Jesus. When the enemy strikes it will multiply the advance for the Kingdom. This new generation of Kingdom agents will show the church and the world what it means to be willing to die for Christ. Satan, out of sheer frustration over what to do, and just because of his own nature, will start killing students, and this will only fan the flame to greater heights.*



What is SCPX?

SCPX is a family of students and ministries spreading the gospel through simple church planting and discipleship movements on campuses and beyond. Our vision is to see at least one thriving student church spreading on and beyond every university in the world.

SCPX Values

Jesus is alive and awesome.

Jesus is Lord and worthy of worship among all people groups. All people everywhere need the message and power of Jesus to experience transformation in this life and eternal life in the next.

The Scriptures are alive and awesome.

God speaks to us and guides us through these inspired words His followers wrote throughout history, canonized in the books Genesis through Revelation. They are the authoritative, inspired words of God and are applicable in all generations and among all people and ethnicities everywhere.

The Church is alive and awesome.

We love the Church. We believe the Church is God's people in the earth who are called to love and bless and disciple the planet by demonstrating God's kingdom here. Church, in its simplest form, can start anywhere. We define local expressions of "church" as a group of people of any size who follow Jesus together. God can use anyone to start a simple form of church. Church is not confined to just a meeting or a place - it is a group of people who experience Jesus together and influence the world around them in daily life.

Permission Given

As part of the Church, all authentic followers of Christ have permission to obey all the commands of Christ, including baptizing, making disciples, facilitating communion, and starting churches among those who don't know Jesus yet.

Prayer is vital for starting, leading, and growing churches.

We don't make disciples by just following rules and principles. We hang out with Jesus by talking with Him regularly, both in groups and privately. When we hang out with God a lot (pray), spiritual momentum around us starts to happen.

The Gifts and Power of the Holy Spirit are vital to our lives and purpose.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are as active and available today as they were in the first century Church. We love the Holy Spirit. We eagerly desire more of Him and His gifts. We let the scriptures challenge us to seek encounters with the Holy Spirit, rather than despise manifestations of the Holy Spirit we may not yet have experienced. The Holy Spirit will always be in complete unity and agreement with God's word.

Character matters.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit function effectively when matched with a life of growing moral excellence and character. We are passionate about being sexually pure (sexual relationships expressed only between one man and one woman in marriage). We want to experience Jesus and develop fully in our potential in Him as we live passionate, wholehearted lives for Him.

Generational Connection.

We believe relationships with spiritual fathers and mothers are vital to the growth and health of a student movement. In this vein, we strive to honor elder leaders in the body of Christ and welcome input and guidance from those who have gone before us.

All Nations are important.

From the teeniest tribe that might stump a GPS, to the university centers of the industrialized nations of the world, we are passionate about all ethnicities everywhere experiencing Jesus. Jesus isn't white, nor is He an American. We do student churches because we love the nations.

This is a short list of some of the values we find ourselves often talking about, praying about, and trying to live out together!

SCPX Training Experience

It's not a conference - it's a hands-on experiential training that will launch student church planters in your region. This 7-10 day catalytic training has changed lives and equipped almost 2,000 student missionaries since 2008. Want to create your own SCPX to plant student churches in your region? We want to help you create! You can download resources and connect with SCPX leaders to help you host an SCPX training experience at:

www.SCPX.org