

LIBERTY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR PLANTING SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCHES
IN NORTHEAST NORTH CAROLINA

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JEFFERY CLARK RUSSELL

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GRADE _____

MENTOR Dr. Charles N. Davidson

READER Dr. David W. Hirschman

ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR PLANTING SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN NORTHEAST NORTH CAROLINA

Jeffery Clark Russell

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Mentor: Dr. Hirschman

The purpose of this thesis is to determine a strategy for planting new churches in the northeast North Carolina region. This thesis will also consider if there is a certain type of person who might demonstrate a contextual propensity toward a new church by exploring the cultural distinctives found among the people of this region as well as the history of church planting in geographic and cultural context. The thesis will engage in demographic research, and explore resources adequate for the planting of new churches helpful to other Southern Baptist associations and other denominations.

Abstract length: 95 words.

DEDICATION

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to following people who have helped greatly in the accomplishment of this project.

--To my beloved wife, Robin, for all of the years of loving support, sacrifices and encouragement she gave me without one word of complaint in spite of the time I was unable to give her so that I could complete this project.

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CHAPTER ONE

Review of Literature

There are several major books and works which are referenced- some extensively- in this thesis which lend understanding to and development of the author's methodology and understanding of his topic.

Jack Redford, *Planting New Churches* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1978).

Jack Redford's *Planting New Churches*¹ was foundational to the author's training and early understanding of church planting methodology; especially for Southern Baptists. Redford was a pioneer in church planting methods and his book was used extensively at most Southern Baptist seminaries in the 1980s and 1990s. At the time of Redford's writing, there were few models beyond the *traditional* church model. One quote that was especially valuable was his statement "Church planting is a normal and natural function for a church. If it does not take on this task, it has become root bound."²

Charles Chaney, *Church Planting at the End of the Twentieth Century* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1994).

Chaney's *Church Planting at the End of the Twenty-first Century* (1994)³ is also foundational and one of the first books written on the subject. What was particularly

¹ Jack Redford, *Planting New Churches* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1978).

² Ibid., p. 78.

³ Charles Chaney, *Church Planting at the End of the Twentieth Century* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1994).

helpful was his development of a regional strategy for planting churches which the writer discusses in his second chapter; giving the author of this thesis something to model as he developed his own strategy for northeast North Carolina. In addition to this, Chaney discusses his biblical methodology, as well as developing a congregational strategy of planting churches. In chapter four, he discusses how to produce a climate for planting churches. The most convincing argument for planting new churches, he says, is based on the research that “Great unchurched populations in America, especially in the metropolitan population centers, demand new churches.”⁴

J.D. Payne, *Discovering Church Planting* (London: Paternoster Press, 2009).

J.D. Payne, *Discovering Church Planting*, was cited throughout this thesis and extremely helpful to its development. This author explores the principles of church planting biblically, theologically, missiologically, historically, and practically. Payne models the *missional* approach to church planting, as opposed to the *plant-and-pastor* model.⁵ Surprisingly, he emphasizes that church planting is really not the goal, but making disciples—which is the focus of the Great Commission.⁶ He begins with a section exploring the biblical and theological foundations of church planting in the formation of ecclesiology and the work of the Holy Spirit with emphasis on prayer and spiritual warfare. He also discusses evangelism, discipleship, and how Christian leaders are developed in the context of church planting. In section II, Payne discusses strategy

⁴ Chaney, p. 147.

⁵ Payne, at:”111-15,” Kindle edition.

⁶ Ibid.,at: “115-19,” Kindle edition.

and contextualization and the role of the mother church, as well as the importance of church planting teams. In section III, the author discusses historical paradigms of church planting since the Great Awakening in colonial America. In the final section, Payne discusses contemporary issues of church planting models of church planting, objections to church planting, planting churches in urban contexts. He also focuses upon contemporary pioneering methods of church planting such as tent-making church planting missionaries and the whole church planting movement. This book pinpoints many of the challenges to church planting and while thorough and challenging, it is valued for its practicality and readability.

David T. Olson, *The American Church in Crisis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008).

David T. Olson's book, *The American Church in Crisis*,⁷ is subtitled: *Groundbreaking Research on a National Database of over 200,000 Churches*. In this book Olsen does an extensive analysis of the research beginning with the question in his introduction "Why examine the American church?" He begins in part I with his observation how many people really attend church in understanding the shifts occurring within church and culture. He develops a model for assessing the culture which he organizes into the following sections of his book: 1) observation, 2) evaluation, 3) introspection, and 4) action. One of the most interesting quotes Olsen gives is, "Should church attendance numbers matter to Christians? When church attendance declines, few people hear the gospel for the first time, take the sacraments, or hear of God's love for

⁷ David T. Olson, *The American Church in Crisis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008).

them.” Olson observes the phenomenon of the *Millenium Effect*,⁸ and denominational winners and losers.⁸ This was particularly helpful because it demonstrates through the research that churches—particularly Southern Baptists are not keeping up with population growth in the South even though there are more churches in these states. In section II, Olson evaluates which churches have survived and why they survive or decline. In Section III, the writer then introspectively examines the cultural change in America and soberly reflects upon the future of the American church if it does not change, and some things they can do to affect these changes. In section IV, Olson discusses action in the message as well as the mission of Jesus as it relates to the message and the mission of the church, and ponders the restoration of the church.

Ben Arment, *Church in the Making* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2010).

Another book which was very helpful in the formation of this thesis was Ben Arment’s *Church in the Making*⁹ Arment has subtitled his book: *What Makes or Breaks a New Church Before it Starts*. He uses Christ’s *Parable of the Soils*, as a springboard to organize his thoughts on how churches are planted and the receptivity of the culture in which they are planted. In the first section, Part I, Arment describes the dynamics of “Good Ground” as opposed to the tough soil in which many churches are planted, how to determine spiritual fertility and to cultivate the ground for growth, and discovery of people of peace—those who are receptive and most supportive of church plants even

⁸ Ibid., at: “417-22,” Kindle edition.

⁹ Ben Arment, *Church in the Making* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2010). Kindle edition.

before the church is planted. However, in this chapter he speaks to the need for some church planters to abandon their efforts when the church plant is not succeeding. Some determine to stay on out of faithfulness when God gives us permission to “walk away.”¹⁰ He gives perhaps the most poignant quote in the entire book for a pastor as well as a church planter who is encountering difficulty: “As a church planter, you are one of God’s choice servants. He loves you, he cares for you, and he doesn’t want you to fail. Put your hand to the plow or grab your sickle. Know the condition of the soil beneath your feet. And prepare for the harvest that God wants to gather through your ministry.”¹¹

In Part II, Arment discusses the “Rolling Rocks” or barriers to church planting. One is aptly described as no momentum and how momentum is essential for nurturing excitement and growth of any church, but especially for new churches. In Part III, the writer titles “Deep Roots” of faith in church plants and how they may be determined. He describes how they are determined on the foreign missions fields, and how important for the soil in which the church is planted be *indigenous* or native to the region or culture in which it is planted. A transplant church planter or church plant will probably not succeed because he does not understand the culture of his soil or have the deep relationships that successful church plants require. “The most successful church plants were not imported; they were homegrown. They were not introduced to a community; they were invited.”¹²

¹⁰ Ibid, at: “839-845,” Kindle edition.

¹¹ Ibid., at: “839-843,” Kindle edition. .

¹² Ibid., at: “1985-90,” Kindle edition.

Also in Part III, Arment argues the point that it is possible to have too many churches or church plants if their “way of doing such” is not different from the others. The one that will win out is the church that can do it differently than the others.¹³

Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006).

No church planting effort would be complete without studying Ed Stetzer, especially his book on *Planting Missional Churches*. He subtitles his book, *Planting a Church That’s Biblically Sound and Reaching People in Culture*.¹⁴ In his organization of the book, Stetzer writes it in twenty-nine short, concise chapters devoted to missional church planting where he opens the book discussing the basics. He discusses in the next few chapters about redeveloping a missional mind-set for North America and the biblical basis of church planting. In chapter four, Stetzer points out many models of church plants and their corresponding church planters, including: The Apostolic Harvest church planter where the planter starts a new church and then moves on; The Founding Pastor model where the church planter starts the church and remains long-term to pastor the church plant. Such modern examples are found in Charles Spurgeon and Rick Warren. Another model Stetzer discusses at length is what he terms the Team Planting model where a group of planters will relocate to an area to start a church.

¹³ Ibid., at: “2007-13,” Kindle edition.

¹⁴ Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), at: “3152-55,” Kindle edition.

In chapter five, Stetzer describes What Makes a Church Planter? In it he explores who can actually plant churches: ordained clergy, laypeople, organizations, agencies and denominations, and churches. In the next section of the chapter he deals with what a church planter looks like; pointing out the need and value for assessments with this acrostic in mind: SHAPE (Spiritual gifts, Heart or passion, Abilities, Personality type, and Experiences or tools that will help a church planter understand when, where, and how to plant a church.

Chapters six through eight deal with developing leadership in the church among laypeople, while chapters nine through twelve discuss understanding cultures and models of church planting and determining what Stetzer calls “a church planting fault line” a term borrowed from geology which defines “earth-shaking transitions which were once rumbling below the surface are later accepted and assimilated into life as normal.”¹⁵

The remaining chapters deal with the finer details of organizing, launching, worshipping, and doing discipleship in a missional church, but chapters twenty-eight and twenty-nine discuss how churches plant churches and describe modern church planting movements which are started with the key elements of prayer, abundant gospel sowing, with philosophy of planting churches intentionally, emphasizing scriptural authority with a focus on local and lay leadership-to name a few factors. In the final section, Stetzer provides an excellent bibliography for reading about missional church planting.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Ed Stetzer and Warren Bird, *Viral Churches* (San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass, 2010).

Another helpful book which led to the formation of this thesis was another one of Ed Stetzer's books coauthored with Warren Bird entitled *Viral Churches*¹⁶. Its subtitle: *Helping Church Planters Become Movement Makers*. The purpose of this book is to describe the recent phenomenon of the church multiplication movement-defined as a "rapid reproduction of churches, measured by a reproduction rate of 50 percent through the third generation of churches, with new churches having 50 percent new converts."¹⁷ Stetzer and Bird write with this hope in mind: "to inspire and help you develop a church multiplication movement-an exponential birth of new churches that engage lost people and that replicate themselves through even more new churches."¹⁸

In the opening chapters, the authors determine that church planting is the new evangelism. However, church multiplication is such a new phenomenon that it is not yet considered mainstream. Aggressive local churches and church planting networks are the ones who are leading the way where denominations once did, and that church planters are cooperating and leaning together at unprecedented rates. In chapter six, the authors discuss that the better church planters are recruited, assessed and deployed, the greater chance the church plant will survive to maturity. In the following two chapters, the authors discuss how new church survivability has dramatically increased in recent years

¹⁶ Ed Stetzer and Warren Bird, *Viral Churches* (San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass, 2010). Kindle edition.

¹⁷ Ibid., at: "293-97," Kindle edition.

¹⁸ Ibid., at:"301-05," Kindle edition.

through the multiplication movement, and how multisite strategies are a growing trend among reproducing churches. Details of how not to grow and the funding of new churches and partnerships are very important. The authors are careful to point out in chapters twelve through fourteen that missional replication faces many challenges that lay ahead, and require different scorecards than existing churches do.

The value of *Viral Churches* to this research is that it helped to lay the framework for a vision which is hoped will be replicated in developing a strategy for starting new churches in the Albemarle region of northeast North Carolina.

Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer, *Spiritual Warfare and Missions* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2010)

Another book that was helpful to the writing of this thesis was Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer's book *Spiritual Warfare and Missions*. The purpose of this book is to identify and "to expose the tactics of our enemy who is seeking to rob Christians of their victory and life of holiness we have been given in Jesus Christ that God might be glorified in our lives personally."¹⁹

The book is organized with twelve chapters determining first God's purpose: to be exalted among the nations, followed by a counter-chapter discussing Satan's purpose: to oppose the Kingdom by depriving God of the praise and glory due Him. Chapter 3 delves into understanding Satan who is the adversary and deceiver of the nations.

Chapter 4 begins the strategy of Satan by keeping nations closed to the gospel, followed

¹⁹Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer, *Spiritual Warfare and Missions* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2010), at:"128-32," Kindle edition.

by keeping people groups hidden from our awareness, also followed by Satan's strategy of persecution of believers and the church. Chapters 7-10 draw out Satan's strategies of convincing Christians that missions is optional, eroding the authority of God's word, distorting the calling of God, and eroding the faith of God's people. In chapters eleven and twelve, the authors discuss how Satan strategies to destroy the spiritual vitality of the church and then talk about the final victory of God.

What was especially helpful to the author was the reminder that spiritual warfare is a very real phenomenon which all pastors, not just church planters, experience in their churches. Personality battles with people, as well as adverse circumstances, ought not to be the emphasis of conflict and problems in the church. Rather, Satan ought to be the object of our prayers with intense warfare against him. Rankin states the most helpful quote: "Satan's most effective strategy is not the opposition to the kingdom of mission fields around the world but the indifference of churches and God's people who have become self-centered and lost a passion for reaching a lost world."²⁰

Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas, *Launch: Starting a New Church from Scratch* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2006).

The purpose of *Launch* is to offer specific strategies of starting new churches, as their title suggests, from *scratch*, based on their experiences as co-pastors of *Journey Church* in Manhattan, New York beginning with no people, no money, and no staff to

²⁰ Ibid., at: "132-37," Kindle edition.

having unprecedented growth in just three years. The book is outlined in three major sections with successive chapters. Section 1 describes the foundation of Journey Church: how it was started from scratch, the calling to start a church, developing a strategy for starting the church and how they were to raise funds to accomplish this strategy. Section two is about formation that discusses how the church planter is to build a staff, plan their first service, and gather a team to launch the church. The next section, Implementation, details how the new church will reach people, build systems, and demonstrates a roadmap of how the church planter can start from scratch to stability to success. The final section, though not labeled specifically, is an appendix of monthly attendance charts, agendas, and recommended resources. The most helpful quote in this book is very encouraging personally to the author: “There is not one right way to start a church. While the Bible gives us theological guidelines for what a church should be, it is relatively silent on the logistics of getting there.”²¹

Rodney Harrison, Tom Cheyney, and Don Overstreet, *Spin-Off Churches* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008).

The purpose of *Spin-Off Churches* is to highlight the value of sponsoring churches and how they can plant new churches deliberately and purposefully. This team of writers begin their book with the compelling premise: “A traditional church can effectively reach those who are not attending their congregation by becoming a spin-off church.”²² They

²¹ Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas, *Launch: Starting a New Church from Scratch* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2006), at: “127-129,” Kindle edition.

²² Harrison, Cheney, and Overstreet, at: “115-17,” Kindle edition.

outline their book with major sections beginning with Part I—Sponsoring Church Fundamentals with the following chapters dedicated to a practical theology of church planting, viewing the history of sponsoring churches and answering why new churches need to be sponsored. They delve into the attitudes toward church sponsorship in Part II as they explore what pastors are saying about the subject, as well as the church planters and denominational leaders. In Part III—Finding the Church Planting Model that Fits, the team writers discuss various approaches to sponsoring churches as they explore what it is to become a “sending church” and developing multi-site churches, or even ethnically diverse churches. Chapter eleven deals with churches that split as well as developing multi-sponsoring churches. Part 4 deals with the more practical aspects of sponsoring new churches as it explores the phases of new church development. Chapter thirteen discusses what it is like to get the church ready to “spin” in *where the spin-off strategy rubber meets the road*. The following chapters, *the joys and realities of parenthood*, and *the upside of the downside: overcoming the hardships in sponsoring* explore the value of planting and sponsoring churches in spite of the difficulties each encounter, what to look for, how to deal with it, to what it means in leaving a legacy of planting churches. Part 5- Finding the Resources, discusses the procurement of the right church planter or church planting team, how to finance and fund the newly-sponsored church plants, exploring bivocational church planters and assessing the value of denominational, associations, and networking. Part 6-Putting the Rubber to the Road, begins with looking at sponsoring church agreements and the supervisory role that sponsoring churches play in church planting. It also discusses what not to do in the chapter, the Top Ten Mistakes

Sponsoring Churches Make as well as the following Top Twenty Mistakes Church Planters Make. The final section, Part 7, discusses how to persuade sponsoring churches to plant new churches by promoting what they term The Set Free Church and the Inner City Method to Your Church. This is where is found one of the most poignant quotations of the entire book: Some Christians think that if these people really wanted help, they would clean themselves up and come to church. But do these comments arise from the heart of God? What we hear from the heart of God is: “Come to Me, all you who are weary and heavy burdened...”²³ At the conclusion of the book is an extensive bibliography and several helpful appendices giving resources to aid sponsoring churches with excellent, practical information: charts, surveys, and worksheets for planting churches.

Darrin Patrick, *Church Planter* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010)

Patrick’s book is fittingly subtitled: *The Man, The Message, and The Mission*, for this is how he organizes his book in its three parts or sections. In Part I, Patrick discusses the Man—the church planter, and how he is a *rescued* or saved man who is called of God and qualified by and dependent upon him. The church planter is also a skilled man: one who possesses various skills and gifts given to him by God that are valuable for the growth of the kingdom of God and in particular for the functions of church planting. As a shepherding man, Patrick describes the church planter as a man who has a pastor’s heart who diligently and eagerly cares for the people who God has set under him. This is

²³ Harrison, Cheyney, and Overstreet, at: “3282-85,” Kindle edition.

“because sheep are precious to Jesus who purchased them with his own blood.”²⁴ This prepares the pastor for living, for preaching, and for influence, as well as enables the shepherd to stay close to Jesus. It is in this section that the author draws his most poignant quote: “The average pastor can shepherd about seventy-five sheep, which (not coincidentally) is roughly the average size of a church in North American. Therefore, unless you want a church of that size or less, you must learn how to set up systems that promote pastoral care in your local church.”²⁵

The next section is *The Message*, in which the writer describes as a historical message rooted in the accomplishment of salvation. The message is Christ-centered, sin-exposing, and idol shattering. By this he means “What we put in place of God captures our imagination and heart, and then we become servants of our object of worship.”²⁶ In the final section, *The Mission*, Patrick describes the heart of mission as that of compassion. Where this mission is housed is in the church which is contextualized with care to the hope of that mission where the city will be transformed by the mission of that message. By contextualized, the author means “Contextualization is the church’s gospel-response to culture. It is simply the taking of the unchanging gospel into an oft-changing culture by restating the meaning of the gospel in a way that is comprehensible to those who are hearing the gospel.”²⁷

²⁴ Darrin Patrick, *Church Planter* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), at “1558-63,” Kindle Edition.

²⁵ Ibid., at: “1645-60,” Kindle edition.

²⁶ Ibid., at: “3136-41.” Kindle edition.

²⁷ Ibid., at: “3915-20,” Kindle edition.

This is an excellent book because of its comprehensiveness as well as its practicality and readability.

Ed Stetzer and David Putnam *Breaking the Missional Code* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006).

Another very helpful source to this thesis is Ed Stetzer and David Putman's book, *Breaking the Missional Code*. It is adeptly subtitled, *Your Church Can Become a Missionary in Your Community*. While not devoted to the methodology of planting churches *per se*, this book is valuable to the church planter by providing a vision for what every church ought to be, whether existing or newly planted. The book is broken down into sixteen concise, yet detailed chapters. The writers begin by telling us of the emerging global context, which means that North America has changed so much as a continent that it is more influenced by the world beyond it than it influences it. Because of this, new methods and models are appearing that are necessary to reach new people groups that the continent has ever had before. "Breaking the code is the recognition that there are visible and invisible characteristics within a community that will make its people resistant to or responsive to the church and its gospel message."²⁸

The second chapter describes how some churches are able to break cultural codes to lead their people in their situation to enable them to consider Jesus Christ, resulting in explosive growth. The next chapter demonstrates the response of the churches to the *commissions* (plural) of Jesus- where he shows that getting involved in missional ministry

²⁸ Ed Stetzer and David Putnam *Breaking the Missional Code* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006) Kindle Edition, at: "183-89," Kindle edition.

is a commandment, not a suggestion, where he gives us a clear call and unfolds the details for us. In chapter four, the writer describes the missional church shift which describe the point where the church no longer focus on the strategies and formulas which used to work, but instead will find the strategies that enable them to connect with the people in their context. The next chapter demonstrates how missional ministry goes through transitions and how they are vastly different than the churches of their past and gives examples of churches that fulfilled those transitions and how they met them. Chapter six points out the values of the leaders and the churches that break the cultural codes; pointing out the values that are transcultural which also provide the tools to enable them to be missional in their context. The next chapter describes the process of *contextualization*, by making the code part of the strategy of the church. Here is where one of the most valuable quotations enters in: “Inherited forms of church are attractive only to certain subcultures. We are losing from our churches many former members who are not losing their faith but find the church uninspiring, disempowering, crushing, and dehumanizing.”²⁹

The remaining chapters discuss emerging strategies and process of spiritual formation of churches that break the code, leading to a revitalization of the church to missional ministry. It also has a chapter that discusses churches that are being planted which will find new and innovative ways of ministry in their unique context. New networks of churches are showing new ways of working together in order to accomplish

²⁹ Ed Stetzer and David Putnam *Breaking the Missional Code* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006) at: “1552-58,” Kindle edition.

their God-given vision without at the same time compromising their faith. The following chapter describes several “best practices” of leaders and churches that break the missional code, followed by a chapter outlining the process of breaking the code by understanding and strategizing to reach their community. The final chapter underscores the fact that there is an *unbroken code* or codes which need the church’s commitment to continue to seek new ways to communicate the gospel in each context. This is often done by investing in younger leaders and intentionally broadening their view of missions and ministry into new areas at home and internationally.

Tim Conder, *The Church in Transition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006).

This book by Tim Conder is also subtitled: *The Journey of Existing Churches into the Emerging Culture*. Again, as it is not a book necessarily dedicated to the task of developing a strategy for church planting, it is helpful to point out the struggles that existing churches encounter as they seek to re-understand their ministry in terms of context and hopefully see themselves as a church that desires to reproduce itself. Eleven chapters are dedicated to this purpose: for the church to see itself honestly in a changing culture and how it can revitalize its ministry. Conder begins by discussing how the church has found itself in a changing landscape. The following two chapters express *seven deadly fears and seven essential conversations* that discuss the interchange between the culture and the gospel and the differences and similarities between Scripture and ethics. These fears include postmodernism and the loss of “truth”, community and the loss of personal faith, and accommodation and the fear of changing the “changeless”

message of the gospel. Conder says that while the world thinks vastly different than the world of the traditional church, “We’ve let *postmodernism* become the lazy and convenient straw man for emerging church critics and the undefined mascot for emerging church enthusiasts.”³⁰ Chapter four continues with part 3 of the discussion of the seven fears and Christian traditions. Chapter five discusses the danger of changing a worship service just to respond to the demands of contextualization and how this is not the best place to begin. The next chapters discuss transitions in spiritual formation, challenging common assumptions that spiritual formation is linear and measurable, or that spiritual development leads to greater certainty or increase in the knowledge of God or that somehow, life will improve. The writer emphasizes what he terms *divine hospitality* that will welcome God’s presence, foster dialogue, and practice kindness among strangers and exiles in this world. Preaching also needs to undergo a transition as to be viewed as a ministry of kindness and intimacy. “I believe our preaching,” says Conder, “must become an intentional expression of intimacy and kindness. The pulpits of our churches have long been vehicles of biblical exposition, spiritual encouragement, and motivation...yet many sermons are marked by tones of cultural despair, militancy, absolute certainty, moral judgment and anger.”³¹ These things, says Conder, clearly need to change. Other items for the transitional church are also considered in the concluding chapters. This author (of the thesis) received more personal encouragement from the pages of this book than for anything else written in his thesis.

³⁰ Tim Conder, *The Church in Transition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006). at: “591-95,” Kindle edition.

³¹ *Ibid.*, at: “1844-48,” Kindle edition.

Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004)

Aubrey Malphurs, a leading writer in the field of church leadership, appropriately subtitles this book, *A Comprehensive Guide for New Churches and Those Desiring Renewal*. In it, the writer organizes his book into three major parts: The Preparation for Church Planting, The Personnel for Church Planting, and The Process of Church Planting. In Part I, Malphurs gives an excellent definition of church planting: “An exhausting but exciting venture of faith that involves the planned process of beginning and growing new local churches, based on Jesus’s promise and in obedience to the Great Commission.”³² From this framework he discusses how church planting is exhausting and hard work, but that it also excites as well as requires faith, and involves a process that should not be allowed to “sit back and be satisfied with maintaining what God has done.”³³ Church planting also requires intentional planning that involves both beginning and growing churches. He defines a local church as “a gathering of professing believers in Christ who, under leadership, have organized to observe the ordinances and obey Jesus’ Great Commission.”³⁴ It involves but doing as well as being. One of the crucial aspects of this section involves financing the church start by exploring the financial fact that God provides as a responses to Jesus promises to provide under the

³² Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), at: “128-29,” Kindle edition.

³³ Ibid., at: “180-83,” Kindle edition.

³⁴ Ibid., at :”200-202,” Kindle edition.

condition of Matthew 6:33 that we must “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.”³⁵

The writer delves into the discussion of financial sources using a combination of both our faith and planning in providing abundantly for us by using sponsoring churches, a core group, family and friends, fund-raising efforts and denominations and organizations, as well as through personal or bi-vocational employment, selling off existing church assets, as well as to develop a prayer team for these efforts.

Part 2 involves the personnel of church planting and the process of assessment the church planter in particular, asking the right questions in light of looking for qualities of sustained excellent combined with a strong attitude of servant-leadership. Part 3 deals with the process of church planting; describing the analogy of child-birth and the parallels that it brings such as conception, childbirth classes, development stage and the birth stage, and the growth stage of church planting leading to the maturity stage where the new church has “babies” or begins to reproduce itself. At the end of this book are some excellent appendices going into more definitions and cultural principles.

Thom S. Rainer and Jess W. Rainer, *The Millennials* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011).

The purpose of *The Millennials* is to describe a whole new generation of people who have emerged on the scene at beginning in the closing decades of the twentieth century. Its descriptive subtitle, *Connecting to America’s Largest Generation*, shows the reader that the authors are not just interested in describing millennials but also engaging

³⁵ Ibid., at: “454-57,” Kindle edition.

them for Jesus Christ. This book was chosen in order to give some understanding to the generation which most church planters are likely to reach or most need to reach as they look to the future. A series of eleven chapters are given to outline and break down this new cultural phenomenon. Chapters one and two introduce the millennial generation to us and giving their perspective on life. The next chapter, *a family affair*, describes the emergence of the definition of acceptable family norms as they were played out on television represented by popular programs throughout four to five decades (from *Leave it to Beaver* to *Married with Children*) and how they became cultural icons. In chapters four, five, and six, the Rainers discuss what they consider as “the new normal” of openness and diversity, and what motivates the millennial, and describes the new workplace of this generation. In the next chapter, the millennials are called “the mediating generation,” descriptive of their willingness and desire to be peacemakers and to build strong families because they are “weary of the fights and polarization in families, in politics, in religion, and in relationships in general.”³⁶

Chapters eight and nine discuss how the new generation relates to both the media and money. The last two chapters deal with the spiritual values of millennials and how the church can respond to them. As a whole, this new generation is not as responsive to what they deem as “organized religion.” They want to see sincerity, clarity, and meaningful translation of faith into practice and are highly suspicious of their elder Boomer church leaders for the insincerity, hypocrisy, and lack of commitment

³⁶ Thom S. Rainer and Jess W. Rainer, *The Millennials* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), at: “2250-55,” Kindle edition.

demonstrated to them. This book opened the authors eyes to the perception this generation has to his own generation, and the great lengths he must go to overcoming the challenges, barriers and obstacles that present themselves here.

Charles Brock: *Indigenous Church Planting* (Neosho, MO: Church Growth International, 1994)

Other than Redford's book, Brock's book on church planting is one of the earliest on the subject. He writes from the perspective of a foreign missionary; having served for at least twenty years in the Philippines. Divided into six major sections, Brock details the first section as preliminaries to planting by discussing the motivation for planting churches, what the essentials are and excess baggage, who can plant churches and what are we seeking to plant. He discusses the various roles for the church planting pastor as well as his members, the lifestyle as well as the language or terms known and understood by church planters. He closes the section by concentrating on the primary focus of the church planting ministry. Section two is entitled, *Focus Before Starting*. It delves into the objectives. Perhaps the most meaningful quotation of the entire book is "The person who does not know his objectives walks with the certainty of a blind person."³⁷ Brock also defines what the term indigenous means: "something native, domestic, and national. It is that which springs from and develops within a particular culture."³⁸ He then discusses the importance of "identifying your target before firing" as a chapter on knowing who it is one is trying to reach in church planting. Finding a place to plant a

³⁷ Charles Brock: *Indigenous Church Planting* (Neosho, MO: Church Growth International, 1994) Google Book edition, p. 96.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 99.

church is the topic of the twelfth chapter, outlining that the successful church planter must know what he is looking for as well as what he is seeking to plant. Brocks suggests starting with a general survey of the location and gathering all the information about the area or region. He then talks about reaching people through relatives, friends, and other contacts first. He then discusses several practical principles of cultivation before the church is actually launched, and then a chapter discussing what strategy and methods should be used. The Bible is the guide and the strategy and methodology ought to be simple, and the approach should be reproducible and should not use anything that they cannot make for themselves. Chapter fifteen discusses styles of leadership and what is most effective. Brock then devotes a chapter about how to overcome situations when there is little response; where the messenger, the message, as well as the methodology must be analyzed.

Section 3 delves into the church planting process- and for the missionary in foreign cultures this usually begins with what it means to be saved. There are a series of lessons and practical ideas in this section about how to conduct Bible studies and other events to introduce the gospel; especially to those who have heard it for the first time. Section IV discusses the birth of a new church, which overviews a pamphlet *I Have Been Born Again, What Next?*, giving eleven lessons for evangelistic follow-up and discipleship and when they get baptized the group is considered a church. Section V. deals with post-birth, giving the process of how to develop the new church into mature believers and leadership training. One principle is important here that is worth noting:

“If (the church planter) thinks he must have a say on everything they do or do everything for them, he becomes their greatest deterrent to growth.”³⁹

The final section deals with *The Church in Fellowship*, a section devoted to birthing and developing a larger group of churches into a fellowship or association and how to organize one. At the end there is a helpful appendix with resources and outlines that would be of practical benefit to the newly planted church or to the new Christian.

David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *UnChristian*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007).

Kinnaman and Lyons subtitle their joint work: *What a New Generation Thinks About Christianity and Why it Matters*. They write this book for the benefit of pastors and other Christian leaders “what exactly do people think about Christians and Christianity? Why do these perceptions exist?”⁴⁰ *UnChristian* explores the mind of the culture and their perceptions of Christian faith and their reluctance to accept it because of the negative and sometimes harsh way that it has been portrayed to them. To engage non-believers and to point them to Christ it is necessary to understand them from their what they truly think about Christians and not by ignoring them. The second chapter explores why present-day Christianity inspires such unfavorable reactions by stating: “We have become famous for what we oppose, rather than who we are for.”⁴¹ The authors lay out some very thorough research and analyze their findings based on many

³⁹ Ibid., 239.

⁴⁰ David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *UnChristian*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), p.11.

⁴¹ Ibid.,p.26.

opinion polls. They say it ought to be a “wake up call” to urge Christians to work to change what they are doing that seem to underscore some of these perceptions. Chapter three discusses the hypocritical perception of Christians. Hypocrisy is defined by the writers “when you profess something that you do not really believe.”⁴² They discuss how Christians somehow acquired this image. In Chapter four, Kinnaman and Lyons discuss the perception that many Christians are more concerned with converting people than they are caring for them as individuals, and thereby add to the perception that Christians are not genuine or real. Chapter five deals with the perception that all Christians are anti-homosexual and feel contempt for them, and how Christians need to demonstrate compassion and love to all people regardless of their lifestyle. However, not all Christians would agree with this statement when he says,

I think one reason so many Christians are hostile toward gays is they have a difficult time figuring out how to view “gayness.” Is it a sin a sickness, or a simple choice? It reminds me of how thirty years ago society struggle with coming to terms with alcoholics. With time we came to better understand alcoholics and alcoholism. Now we need to come to terms with sexual brokenness, including homosexuality.⁴³

They almost seem to be saying with that comparison that homosexuality is a disease or something the homosexual cannot help.

Chapter six asserts the idea that “Christians are boring, unintelligent, old-fashioned, and out of touch with reality.”⁴⁴ The writers discuss how this needs to change

⁴² Ibid.,p. 41.

⁴³ Kinnaman and Lyons, pp. 18-19.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 121.

to depict Christians as engaged, informed and offer sophisticated responses to the issues people face instead of checking their brains at the door. Chapter seven begins with the perception that all Christians are somehow motivated by a political right-wing agenda, but ought to be characterized by respecting others and think biblically about complex issues. Chapter eight explores why the non-believing world believes that most Christians are judgmental and so quick to find fault with others rather than demonstrating grace by looking for the good in others and seeing their potential in Christ.

Chapter nine helps the Christian learn how to respond to a broken world with the right perspective, especially when facing criticism and learning how to connect with people and serving them. The writers give value to their research in the afterword section by saying, “My sense was that if Christians could read the mind of outsiders, filtered through the objective lens of research, it would provide the motivation we needed to change how we see ourselves and our role in culture.”⁴⁵

Other works cited and/or consulted in this dissertation thesis include:

Ken Davis, *Multicultural Church Planting Models*, The Journal of Ministry and Theology (Spring 2003) p. 114
http://www.bbc.edu/journal/volume7_1/Multicultural_Church-Davis.pdf

This article helped the author observe and understand the various models developed for ministry among multicultural churches and church plants. Davis begins his article with a discussion of the *multicongregational model*, which refers to more than one congregation meeting in a church building with the primary congregation (owner of the

⁴⁵ Ibid.,p. 221.

building) being the sponsor. Then there is the *multilanguage* satellite model, which is sponsored by the mother church but planted in a different location. Thirdly, the writer discusses the *cell-celebration* model. This functions “in this model church planters intentionally launch numerous house groups (cells) whose members also attend a weekly or biweekly celebrative worship service either at a central campus or rented hall.”⁴⁶ Davis then refers to the Multiethnic model, which may “be defined as a culturally and ethnically diverse body which (1) meets together as one congregation, (2) utilizes one language—usually English—yet (3) designs its worship services and ministry for a variety of cultural groups.”⁴⁷ These models are very effective in ministering in urban and suburban settings.

Thom Rainer, *Understanding Millennials “What Millennials Want in Leaders* (Nashville, TN: Lifeway: Facts and Trends, Winter 2011), pp. 4-5.

This article focuses upon the emerging population of the nation and the culture, born between 1980 and 2000, and what they expect from their leaders. They possess tremendous respect for their elders and desire to be led- and want good examples above them to emulate. Millennials typically possess a gentle spirit and this is what they desire to see in their leaders as well. Millennials are marked by a desire for transparency and

⁴⁶ Ken Davis, *Multicultural Church Planting Models*, *The Journal of Ministry and Theology* (Spring 2003) p. 114 http://www.bbc.edu/journal/volume7_1/Multicultural_Church-Davis.pdf (Accessed January 9, 2011).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.5.

unpretentiousness: “They are fed up with business leaders who are more concerned about personal gain than serving others. They want leaders with integrity.”⁴⁸

Resource: *Associational Church Planting Backpack*: (North American Mission Board: Church Planting Group, 2007).

This resource, published by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, was very helpful to the New Work team to help devise their strategy of planting churches in northeastern North Carolina. Actually, this resource was published with the needs of North Carolina Baptists in mind, which gives some excellent guidelines. The one most helpful was *Delivery System of the Church Planting Process*. In it, the writers discuss devising the Multiplying Church Network: Doing What We Cannot Do By Ourselves to Reach the Lost. The Multiplying Church Network, or MCN,

MCN is a group of representatives from different churches that meet regularly for the purpose of praying, sharing, sharpening, planning, and learning. Together they strategize how to lead their congregations to start healthy, growing, and reproducing churches. The intention is for the cross-pollination of ideas, experiences, and gifts to result in an effective, cooperative effort.⁴⁹

Partners in Church Planting: A Guide to Church Planting for the Partnering Church, An Equipping Resource, (Alpharetta, GA: Church Planting Group, North American Mission Board, 2006).

This resource was also very helpful to the New Work team for giving direction and help to sponsoring churches, and to provide guidelines for direction. The writers

⁴⁸ Thom Rainer, *Understanding Millennials “What Millennials Want in Leaders* (Nashville, TN: Lifeway: Facts and Trends, Winter 2011) pp. 4-5.

⁴⁹ Resource: *Associational Church Planting Backpack*: (North American Mission Board: Church Planting Group, 2007), p. 24.

give sponsoring churches and other partners what they call “mileposts” to aid them in their ministry of planting churches such as Milepost 1) Committed as a Partnering Church; 2) Prayer Strategy Implemented; 3) Church Leadership Team Trained and Deployed; 4) Ministry Focus Group and Place Identified; 5) Planting Strategy Developed by the Leadership Team; etc. These and other mileposts create the framework and structure for the New Work team, as well as network of churches, in which to operate. A compact disk was also provided in the resource to reproduce and to share with churches to encourage and enlist their support and outline the structure necessary for their leadership to plant churches.

CHAPTER TWO

Statement of the Thesis

Developing a Strategy for Planting Southern Baptist Churches in Northeast North Carolina

INTRODUCTION

The author is grateful to a statement in Aubrey Malphur's book *Planting Growing Churches*. He says "Church planting is not easy. It's exhausting work! However, it's no different than any other ministry in that church planters 'reap what they sow.'"⁵⁰ The purpose of this thesis is to determine a strategy for planting new churches in the northeast North Carolina region—a vast territory and divergent population. This thesis will also consider if there is a certain type of person who might demonstrate a contextual propensity or attraction toward a new church if it were to be planted. What are some of the cultural distinctives found among the people of northeast North Carolina of which a church planter might be interested as he investigates the church planting potential of the region? What type of strategy will be developed to reach them?

Church planting is indeed difficult work. This author knows this by personal experience of doing it himself in western Pennsylvania in the late 1980s. Yet Scripture affirms, "For with God nothing will be impossible," (Luke 1:37 NKJV). While the task placed before this author is not impossible, it is often an overwhelming if not daunting

⁵⁰ Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004) at: "128-29," Kindle Edition.

one. This is the reason why a strategy must be developed to accomplish this task. One writer defines a strategy as “simply a logical plan that gets you from where you are to where God wants you to be. A well-planned strategy will help you to be more faithful with what God has called you to do.”⁵¹

METHODOLOGY

This thesis undertaking is a project seeking to develop a strategy to plant churches in the Chowan Baptist Association, a historic Southern Baptist association of churches in the Albemarle region of northeastern North Carolina. One of the factors which will be explored in this thesis is the fact that a strategy of planting biblically-based multiplying churches has not been attempted in almost two centuries. Another factor is the attitude of prejudice in favor of an established, *business-as-usual* church agenda that seems to mitigate somewhat against the planting of churches, or at least seems to push the concern for church planting aside. The thesis will build into the strategy some means to help overcome this attitude, such as education, training, and prayer, as the existing churches are enlisted to help with starting new churches.

This thesis will also seek to develop a strategy of church planting for Northeast North Carolina which will also explore the history of church planting in geographic and cultural context, incorporate the elements of prayer, to exegete the Biblical basis of church planting, to educate and to train pastors, denominational leaders and churches.

⁵¹ Nelson Searcy and Karrick Thomas, *Launch: Starting a New Church from Scratch* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2006) at: “433-436,” Kindle Edition.

The biblical framework for this thesis is understood through the application of Jesus' *Parable of the Sower*; which identifies the elements of church planting in the seed (the church plant/gospel message), the soil (the cultural and geographic context in which the church/seed is planted), the sower (identified as the character, person, and training of the church planter), and sowing (the manner and/or technique which the church planter/sower effectively plants his church). The analogy of farming is further expressed further as understood in basic agricultural techniques of soil cultivation. The strategy will engage in demographic research, the cultivation and training of new church leadership, and procure resources adequate for the planting of new churches. The author hopes that the development and implementation of the strategy will prove helpful as a resource in aiding other Southern Baptist associations and other denominations in planting of new churches.

THEORETICAL BASIS FOR THE PROJECT

God created us to reproduce. It is part of his order of the creative universe. The church was a creation of Jesus Christ, and his church is to follow this order as well as human beings and other created things. Dr. Charles Swindoll, citing an article from the *Smithsonian*, underscores this point as the author relates it to church planting in the following illustration:

Dr. John Calhoun, a research psychologist at the National Institutes of Mental Health, built a nine-foot-square cage for selected mice and observed them as their population grew from 8 to 2,200. The cage was designed to contain comfortably a population of 160. Food, water, and other resources were always abundant. All the mortality factors except aging were eliminated. As the population reached its

peak at 2,200 after about two and one-half years, the colony of mice began to disintegrate. There was no physical escape from their closed environment. Adult mice formed natural groups of about a dozen individual mice. In the groups each mouse performed a particular social role, but there were no roles in which to place the healthy young mice. This totally disrupted the whole society. The males who had protected their territory withdrew from leadership. The females became aggressive and forced out the young. And the young grew to be only self-indulgent. They ate, drank, slept, groomed themselves, but showed no normal aggression and failed to reproduce. Dr. Calhoun observed that courtship and mating—the most complex activities for mice—were the first activities to cease. After five years all of the mice had died, despite the fact that they had plenty of water, food, and no disease. What result would such overcrowding have on humanity? Calhoun suggests that we would first of all cease to reproduce our ideas, and along with our ideas, our goals, and ideals. In other words, our values would be lost.⁵²

The parallels that Calhoun and Swindoll raise, even though they are observations of mice as they relate to humanity, are easily transferable upon the need for the reproduction of new churches. Unlike the experiment of the mice cited by Calhoun's article, however, there are no limitations placed upon churches as they relate to human populations. In other words, when Christ commanded his followers to make disciples, he never placed a ceiling limiting how many disciples (and consequently churches) may be made. For that matter, God never placed an upper level to the extent of human population, and as this author observes, leaders of Christian churches must overcome the natural tendency to become sated and comfortable. Indeed Christ explained in his parable of the talents, "for to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away," (Matthew 25:29 NKJV). The church must strive against the sinful tendency to be

⁵² Charles R. Swindoll, *The Church Awakening: An Urgent Call for Renewal*, (New York: FaithWords, 2010), pp. 27-28.

comfortable and continue to meet new challenges and new goals to the extent that new disciples are made as new churches are begun.

STATEMENT OF LIMITATIONS

While the author hopes that the principles drawn out in this thesis will be beneficial and applicable to any church planter of any denomination and of any location who wishes to plant a church, the research will be limited to Southern Baptist Church planting in the Northeast North Carolina region. Ben Arment says that “regardless of the type of culture, each group relates differently to the gospel, even in the subtlest ways.”⁵³

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Definitions of terms are necessary that the right assumptions may be made as one operates in the task of church planting. “Sadly few church leaders work from a solid definition of the church. It is very important to define and understand what the church is biblically before we attempt to plant, lead, and serve local churches.”⁵⁴

Church Plant—the term "church planting" is commonly used in Christian circles to refer to the starting up of a new church. New churches are either started by missionaries or members of a local sending church. Aubrey Malfurs defines church planting as “an

⁵³ Arment, at: “1409-12,” Kindle edition.

⁵⁴ Patrick, at: “3651-55,” Kindle edition.

exhausting, but exciting venture of faith that involves the planned process of beginning and growing new local churches, based on Jesus' promise and in obedience to his Great Commission."⁵⁵

Church Planter— the individual Christian worker, usually a pastor, who is endowed with a special calling to plant a church.

Church Planting Network(s) —a network or group of new works, churches for the purpose of building community for the purpose of assisting and encouraging each other.

Church Start the act of beginning a congregation among a certain group of people with the hopes that it will become a church plant.

Cultivation— in agriculture is the act of preparing the soil and keeping it disposed for positive plant growth such as plowing, tilling, fertilizing, watering and weeding. In church planting, it is all of the effort (both God's and man's) that goes into making the gospel receptive in a person's heart, and making a church plant receptive in the community where it is planted.

The Albemarle Region—Northeastern North Carolina (or the Albemarle Region) consists of 16 counties in extreme northeast North Carolina that surrounds the Albemarle Sound and its tributaries, such as the Chowan River and the Roanoke River. Although the region has historically lagged behind the rest of North Carolina in terms of economic growth, it

⁵⁵ Malphurs, at: "128-34," Kindle edition

has numerous attractions in its undeveloped beaches, rivers, and small towns. The area comprises the northern part of the Inner Banks.

Chowan Baptist Association (CBA)—An association of affiliated Southern Baptist Churches roughly corresponding to the Albemarle Region which began in 1806 as a break-off from the Kehukie (Primitive) Baptist Association. Its purpose is to strategize mission together as well as to engender fellowship. It is led by an Associational Missionary (at this writing Dr. Robert Roberts) who directs the association's mission objectives as well as a small office staff. The CBA is headquartered in Hertford, NC.

Millennials—A generation of people born or reaching maturity after the year 2000 (from 1980 to present).

Missio Dei (Latin)—Is a Latin phrase that has been helpful in reminding the church that mission is not the invention, responsibility, or program of human origin, but flows from the character and purposes of God.”⁵⁶

New Work—A synonymous term for church planting or inclusive of new churches and ministries which may also be restarted or given a new emphasis, structure, or location. The term also designates the name of the ministry team given to the task of church planting. The New Work ministry team of the association sought to abandon this term in order to lend better clarity to their purpose of church planting.

⁵⁶ Dave Early, *Church Planting and the Heart of God*, (http://daveearly.net/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/CHURCH_PLANTING_AND_THE_HEART_OF_GOD.238114016.pdf). Accessed January 29, 2011. P.1.

Northeast North Carolina—a term which may be used interchangeably with the Albemarle Region (see listing).

Outer Banks (OBX)—is a 200-mile (320-km) long string of narrow barrier islands off the coast of North Carolina, beginning in the southeastern corner of Virginia Beach on the east coast of the United States. They cover approximately half the northern North Carolina coastline, separating the Currituck Sound, Albemarle Sound, and Pamlico Sound from the Atlantic Ocean. The Outer Banks is a major tourist destination and is known for its temperate climate and wide expanse of open beachfront, as well as the site of the Wright Brothers' first manned airplane flight in 1903.

Postmodernism—Of, relating to, or being any of various movements in reaction to modernism that are typically characterized by a return to traditional materials and forms (as in architecture) or by ironic self-reference and absurdity (as in literature) *b* : of, relating to, or being a theory that involves a radical reappraisal of modern assumptions about culture, identity, history, or language.⁵⁷

Strategy (church planting)—as defined by J.D. Payne, is “a prayerfully discerned, Spirit-guided process of preparation, development, implementation, and evaluation of the necessary steps involved in biblical church planting.”⁵⁸

⁵⁷Merriam Webster On-line Dictionary, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/postmodernism> (Accessed January 29, 2011).

⁵⁸ Payne, at: “1937-1141,” Kindle edition.

CHAPTER THREE

The Seed: The Biblical Basis for Church Planting

The methodology for this project takes as its primary inspiration Christ's *Parable of the Sower*, where the seed is explained by Christ as the gospel message which is planted in the soil.⁵⁹ Biblical allusions and patterns for the basis of church planting resonate throughout Scripture. From the earliest of times, God instilled into man the principle and the basis for church planting. One finds from the beginning that reproductions of all things was on God's mind Genesis: including the concept for church multiplication: "Adam and Eve, creatures in His image, filled with His glory, reflecting His righteousness, were commissioned with a one-sentence command: "*Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it*"⁶⁰ (Genesis 1:28). Again, he states that:

They were created with a natural fertility according to their kind. It was expected of them to put their fertility into action, so that the replenishment could take place. This was the beginning of an earth filled with a God-kind of people – a human race in constant fellowship with their Creator – a kingdom that would rule over the animal world.⁶¹

According to missiologist J.D. Payne, it is the New Testament which offers the most developed and direct understanding for the concept of church planting. "Church

⁵⁹ Matthew 13:3-9NKJV.

⁶⁰ Daniel Vermeulen, *The Biblical Basis for Saturation Church Planting*, pp. 2-3, http://www.dawnministries.org/assets/files/pdf/other-resources/biblical_basis_for_SCP.pdf (accessed November 1, 2010).

⁶¹ Ibid.

planting is both a method and a strategy of fulfilling the Great Commission.”⁶² Payne incorporates the phrase *Missio Dei* to assert that our God is “a missionary God” who “takes the initiative to engage his creation with his plan of salvation for his glory.”⁶³ It is from this doctrine Payne asserts that church planting receives its biblical basis and foundation.⁶⁴ Rather than stating that church planting is asserted directly in Scripture, Payne says that the concept of church planting developed from Christ’s mandate to make disciples: “It is out of a discipleship-making movement that church-planting movements occur.”⁶⁵

There are also numerous references dealing with the movement of God in the process of evangelism and disciple-making as it relates to church planting. Church planting in the New Testament represents a fulfillment of Jesus commandment and prophecy in Acts 1:8. Jesus commanded his disciples to witness for him in the power of the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the whole world. In the book of Acts, it tells how the early church went about obeying Jesus’ command. They spread the gospel through the Roman Empire by means of church planting. Jesus’ words provided them with the plan, and the Holy Spirit provided them with the power necessary to complete the plan.

Dr. Elmer Towns, in his manual called *Getting a Church Started*, says,

⁶² J.D. Payne, at: “383-87,” Kindle edition.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid. at: 419-423,” Kindle edition.

No one questions the command of the Great Commission to go and win lost people to Jesus Christ. But . . . Baptists believe that the second aspect of the Great Commission is planting New Testament churches, for this is the means to reach lost people in every culture of the world. In a simplistic observation, one of the reasons why so much foreign mission effort is fruitless, is because great effort is spent on winning people apart from a New Testament church. All evangelism has its place...but, God's primary method of evangelizing an area is by planting a New Testament church to reach the area with the gospel.⁶⁶

As already implied, the first scripturally-directed precedent for such a movement comes from the Great Commission: The apostles and followers of Jesus prayed ten days in the upper room. On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit filled the apostles with great power, and they proclaimed the gospel with amazing boldness. When Peter invited the people to respond, more than three thousand professed faith in Christ and followed him in baptism. These three thousand formed the early church and, as this experience demonstrates, all church planting efforts must be bathed in prayer.⁶⁷

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age. Amen," (Matthew 28:18-20).

Missiologist and strategist, Ed Stetzer, in his book *Planting Missional Churches* also focuses his church planting theology on The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) where he points to four distinct disciplines of Jesus from this passage.⁶⁸ The first of

⁶⁶ Elmer Towns, *Getting a Church Started* (Lynchburg, VA: Liberty University School of LifeLong Learning, 1993), p. 9.

⁶⁷ Equipping Team, *Partners in Church Planting: A Guide to Church Planting for the Partnering Church* (Alpharetta, GA: Published by the North American Mission Board, 2006), p. 1.2.

⁶⁸ Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2006), at: "37-38" Kindle Edition.

these disciplines is “I am sending you” (John 20:21) where the mandate “to go” is emphasized here.⁶⁹

Jesus similarly communicated his Commission in other Gospel passages as well as in the Acts of the Apostles,

And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24: 45-47 NKJV)⁷⁰

So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the *sins* of any, they are retained,” (John 20:21-23NKJV)⁷¹

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. (Acts 1:8NKJV).⁷²

It is in the Pauline Epistles, however, where one discovers the most refined directive for discipleship-as developed in the framework of church planting-begins to take shape. Steve Timmis and Tim Chester, in their popular work *Total Church*, state: “For Paul mission meant planting churches. In the New Testament, wherever the gospel was preached, local churches were established.”⁷³

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ cited by J.D. Payne, at: “428-432,” Kindle edition.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Steven Timmis and Tim Chester, *Total Church* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2008) p. 113.

The passage in Acts 2:42-47 helps bring to an understanding the nature and the functions of the first church. These verses explain how the believers devoted themselves to doctrinal teaching, fellowship, worship, group prayer, benevolence, and witness. The Lord blessed their efforts, and new people came to Christ daily. These verses lay out the six basic functions of a New Testament Church: worship, evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, and missions. The church in Jerusalem grew rapidly: five thousand men were saved in the Temple (Acts 4:4), and multitudes believed (Acts 5:14), and even priests came to faith in Christ (Acts 6:7).⁷⁴

When Saul began to persecute the church, the believers were scattered throughout the Middle East (Acts 8:1). These laypersons proved to be effective witnesses and evangelists (Acts 8:4). Philip, a deacon, preached with great effectiveness in Samaria and planted a church there and witnessed to the Ethiopian whom is credited with taking the gospel message to his home country. Peter planted the first Gentile church in the home of Cornelius. The scattered members from Jerusalem started Jewish churches in many places (Acts 11:19). In Antioch of Syria, the refugees from Jerusalem planted the first multiethnic church which included both Jewish and Gentile converts. (11:20-21). These passages teach us that deacons and laypersons successfully plant new churches.⁷⁵

The church in Antioch became the great missionary church of the New Testament (Acts 13:1-3). The leaders of the church were sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit

⁷⁴ NAMB publication, pp. 1-3.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

who instructed them to commission Barnabas and Saul as missionary church planters. Elmer Towns says “The apostles and prophets did establish many local churches, but is this what is meant? Their church-planting activity was probably an application of Ephesians 2:20, but more was meant.”⁷⁶ They were the human instruments that established the Church in general. The church leaders demonstrated their submission to the Lord by obeying him and sending out two of their best workers. Church history recounts that the Antioch church grew to become one of the pillars of early Christianity. This passage teaches us that God blesses churches that send out their members to plant churches.⁷⁷

The Apostle Paul became one of the greatest itinerant church planters in Christian history. He and his missionary teams traveled through Asia Minor and Greece planting churches. Normally, Paul would begin a new work by preaching in the synagogue. There he had opportunities to speak to Jews, proselytes (Gentile converts to Judaism), and God-fearers. Paul found his greatest response among this group.

It was under Paul’s direction that one sees the life of these early church plants beginning to take shape. It is about this that Charles Chaney comments “through the process of church plant, the Body of Christ is brought into its fullness.”⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Elmer Towns, *A Practical Encyclopedia of Church Growth* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Publications, 2001) p. 50.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Charles Chaney, *Church Planting at the End of the Twentieth Century* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1993), p. 22.

Ephesians 2:11-22, rather than being a bulwark against efforts to plant congregations among all the cultural groupings of mankind, supports church planting in all the tribes and families of men. This seminal paragraph describes the purpose of God in redemption from the point of view of corporate experience. It speaks of peoples, not individuals. Through his cross, Jesus has broken down the wall that divided Jewish peoples from Gentile peoples. The imagery found in this passage is surely the temple, in Jerusalem. The walls that separated the Gentiles from the holy place have been destroyed. All the ethnic groupings of the world now have equal access to the Father.⁷⁹

The last statement is especially significant with the study in its context. For as the research will later bear out, the ethnic diversity of the region underscores a philosophy of church planting that will embrace the cultural and ethnic diversity which is present within it, where for years so much has divided them; now exists a biblical framework of church planting that will not only identify that diversity but will also bring together if not unify that ethnic diversity. It is in the breaking down of barriers, not erecting new ones, that planting new churches will seek to accomplish as it applies the gospel through the Great Commission to transform this area and region.

Church planter missiologists Timmis and Chester further expand this idea by saying:

The New Testament pattern of church life implies a regular transplanting of churches . . . Church planting is part of *normal* (author's italics) church life. When the Great Commission is authentically and aggressively embraced, the natural and normal outcome ought to be newly made disciples who gather together in newly formed churches by Christians living on mission together.⁸⁰

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰ Timmis and Chester, p. 114.

J.D. Payne also cites I Thessalonians 1: 2-10 as a specific pattern or model of how church planting ought to take place based upon the Great Commission as it contains at least four necessary components or elements necessary for church planting: “Sowers, seed, soil, and spirit.”⁸¹ This, he says, is a theological framework for church planting, and ought to at least include *mission dei*, the incarnation, and the kingdom of God.⁸² The following passage contains and demonstrates all of these elements:

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God. For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.⁸³

However, Acts 16 is perhaps one of the most compelling scriptural references on church planting because it not only includes the imperative to plant churches, but it also extends the vision as the Holy Spirit opened up the eyes of the Apostle Paul to the possibilities that could exist as churches were extended from Asia Minor into Europe. It

⁸¹ J.D. Payne, at: “464-469,” Kindle edition.

⁸² *Ibid.*, at: “473-78,” Kindle edition.

⁸³ I Thessalonians 1:2-10 NKJV as cited by J.D. Payne, at: “463-69,” Kindle edition.

also gives greater insight into what must be known about the people to which the gospel message is taken and consequently how to apply that same insight into church planting:

Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.⁸⁴

The reference to greater insight mentioned above is illustrated by Ben Arment in his book, *The Church in the Making*.⁸⁵ Arment offers this insight as he observes the child's game Red Rover and how children play the game by holding hands in a line while a child from the opposite team looks for the weakest link in the line to crash through; thereby succeeding and then taking an opponent of his choosing back to his team. He relates how some modern strategies of church planting:

Like Paul in Acts 16, we hear the call, "Come over and help us!" and we react with a violent attempt to just break through the line. We have a dream in our heart to plant a church, and we become so consumed with this vision that we barrel right into a new town looking for the weakest link in the chain before ever getting an honest and clear picture of the people that live there. We start placing into a community... (with our own idea of how it ought to be done) without ever considering the group of people into which we're being sent. And before we know it, we find ourselves strangled, trying to break into a community that is not ready or able to receive the church we have planted.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Acts 16:6-10NKJV.

⁸⁵ Ben Arment, *The Church in the Making*, (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2010) at: "54-57," Kindle Edition.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

One aspect that has not been explored to this point which seems to be at the center of the entire biblical understanding of the Great Commission and that is faith. Church planting is rooted in faith which is at the heart of what God requires when serving him. “Anything of authentic spiritual significance is accomplished through faith. The writer of Hebrews affirms that ‘without faith it is impossible to please God.’⁸⁷

Of all of the things that could be discussed about the biblical basis of church planting, no treatment of the subject would be complete without a discussion of a special individual some missiologists have so termed as a “person of peace.” Christ also stresses the importance of this *Person of Peace* when he says, “When you enter any town or village, find out who is worthy and stay there until you leave. Greet a household when you enter it, and if the household is worthy, let your peace be on it,” (Matthew 10:11-13).

Payne defines “the person of peace is that individual who is the first one to come to faith in Christ through the love and service of the church planting team. This person is significant to the dissemination of the gospel through the people group or population.”⁸⁸

Arment also states that the *Person of Peace*,

Is someone God uses to help make your ministry possible. It’s a relational foothold. They don’t have to be Christians. Some are, some aren’t. What distinguishes them, however, is their hospitality toward your ministry. They could be financial donors, business people, who offer up free services, well-connected individuals who introduce you to friends- you name it. But they are all God’s agents, sometimes unknowingly, for making your ministry possible. You

⁸⁷ Hebrews 11:6 NKJV cited in: Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004) at: “162-167,” Kindle Edition.

⁸⁸ Payne, at: “1081-1083,” Kindle edition.

need a person of peace. And when you find one, you'll know you're supposed to be there.⁸⁹

The author would expand this definition to also include believing individuals who possess the vision and heart for church planting who may already be praying and working in the effort of biblical church planting in a certain area. Such unusual people do exist and will be discussed later in this thesis through persons who were discovered even as the church planting strategy was developing in its initial stages. However, it is sufficient here to include a comment from J.D. Payne who said “Wise church planters allow the Spirit to guide them to the people he is going to use to birth his church. It was through such guidance that the Spirit took Paul and Silas to the households of Lydia and the Philippian jailer and birthed the Philippian church (Acts 16:14-15, 32-33).⁹⁰

The Meshing of Biblical Framework into the Methodology

Out of consideration of the biblical support given in this section, a biblical framework of church planting can now be constructed. The author will reference Christ's *Parable of the Sower* (Mark 4:1-10) as a framework to interpret the science of church planting in his particular context in northeast North Carolina. The parabolic concept of planting the seed of the gospel seems to work equally well in reference to church planting in this context for it relates to what many residents in this region

⁸⁹ Arment, at: “850-855,” Kindle edition.

⁹⁰ Payne, at: “1084-1087,” Kindle edition.

understand: agriculture and farming. It is this passage around which this thesis and study is centered, because so much depends upon the condition of the soil and how it is prepared before the first seed is sown:

When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands *it*, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.⁹¹

J.D. Payne says, as he expounds upon the Book of Acts, that “Paul and his team represent the sowers. The Gospel is the seed sown in the hearts, or soil of the (people comprising the churches). The Spirit is the holy spirit who opens the heart to the gospel and brings about the birth of his churches.”⁹² Payne further argues that while the situation and makeup of the communities will differ from place to place, each church that is planted as cited in the New Testament contain each of these four elements in this framework. Following this framework will cultivate and lead to healthy, vibrant church plants, or as one author asserts, “Remove one of these and biblical church planting is impossible.”⁹³ This author makes the assertion that one of the keys to successful church planting is to scatter or plant as much “seed” in terms of education to assure a wider

⁹¹ Matthew 13:19-23NKJV.

⁹² J.D. Payne, at: “469-74,” Kindle edition.

⁹³ Ibid.

range of support and acceptance among the churches and particularly among their pastors. Where acceptance of the necessity of church planting abounds, the greater success church planters will enjoy as they are supported in prayer and encouragement by their colleagues in the already established churches. This will occur as pastors are encouraged to participate in the church planting process and as they are invited to share in the vision with the church planters themselves.

This study will seek to develop as a basis these four elements mentioned above, namely; the sowers, the seed, the soil, and the spirit, to use as a framework to develop in this thesis and his strategy to educate the existing churches; especially the pastoral leadership, in making them favorable planting churches in northeastern North Carolina.

CHAPTER FOUR

Cultivating the Soil in the Albemarle Region

The History of Church Planting in Cultural Context.

Any farmer would understand that before the act of planting a seed can take place, the ground into which it is planted must be thoroughly cultivated. Cultivation is the process of making the soil receptive to the seed, as well as the work that it takes to nurture the seed after it is planted to the goal of reaping a successful harvest from that seed. There is a significant amount of work such as plowing, tilling, hoeing and spraying and other work that will endanger the seed's germination. But even before these things are done to the soil, the astute farmer will examine the soil that he plants. Some soils are better than others. Some will have a sandy or loamy consistency, while other soil will consist mostly of clay or have much mineral content and other matter, such as rocks, mixed into it. The soil will have a different consistency from one geographic location to the next, and will require differing methods of cultivation to ensure a successful harvest. There are some crops which will germinate most anywhere, while others require the most specific type of soil for it to germinate. Weather is also a factor in soil cultivation, and the growing season will vary from state to state or even within a state or geographic region. Agricultural experts are employed, usually by state universities and agricultural institutes to assist farmers with knowledge and recommendations as the farmer as he cultivates and works the soil. Such knowledge is not just essential for the success of a farmer's crop, but ultimately the entire nation dependent upon it to maintain an adequate food supply.

In relating this agricultural analogy to church planting, church life analyst, David Olson, says that “before determining a strategy for change, church leaders must first understand the shifts occurring between church and culture. The church needs explorers to delve into the demographic and spiritual topography of our country.”⁹⁴ This section of the thesis will seek to explore the soil of church planting in the cultural context of church life in northeast North Carolina, its history, the character of its people, and the impact local societal attitudes from the past have upon the church today, their acceptance of growth and change in their community, and how they feel about the newcomers to their region and how concerned they are to reach them.

The research element, which will be found later in this thesis, will develop a modern profile of residents of the Albemarle region. But a thorough history of the people of this region will help to reveal the condition of the cultural soil into which the seed of the gospel is to be planted as well as to relate to the selection of the right type of sower for this context.

A History of the People and Church Planting in Northeast North Carolina

Many agricultural experts and soil conservationists would agree that one important element of crop production is the examination of the soil’s history in particular region. For example, the greatest enemy to the production of cotton in the South was an insect known as the boll weevil. In the years 1918-1924, a severe infestation of this insect reduced cotton yields by almost thirty percent. This created an enormous negative

⁹⁴ David T. Olson, at: “356-59,” Kindle Edition.

economic impact and forced farmers to diversify the types and amounts of the crops they grew and how they cultivated the soil. The soil, especially that of southeastern United States, has an established history.⁹⁵ In the same way, northeastern North Carolina, also known as the Albemarle region, has a spiritual history of planting churches. This section will examine this spiritual history and the receptivity of the soil through time and the factors which made it more or less conducive to spreading of the gospel and planting churches in this region. This section will also examine some of the dynamics of cultural and social character and flavor of the region; indeed many historic elements of culture, (religious and cultural attitudes) have shaped and continue to have some influence upon church life-particularly among the regions' oldest residents. One particular historical document describes the people of Pasquotank County, one of the Albemarle's oldest political regions:

Pasquotank people have ever been hospitable to strangers within the gates and welcome those who come to settle and join in making the county a better place to live and raise families. Commencing about 1880, a new wave of prosperity swept over Pasquotank and except for the depression years of 1930-35 has continued. Blooded livestock made its appearance soon after 1900; then came new crops like soy beans and lespedeza and finally, hybrid corn. Variety and rotation displaced the old standard of "cotton and corn"; beef production and dairying was added to hog and sheep raising. The scarcity of good labor after the depression years led to machine methods in farming which revolutionized agriculture in the county. Now, concrete grain elevators are common sights along the countryside, and this area has begun to compete with the Middle West in grain production. Farming is one of the most profitable activities.

The elimination of distances and differences by the automobile, paved highways, telephone, radio, and television has brought changes to be sure; but basically, Pasquotank County and its people are little changed from their forefathers and their inherited traditions. The machine age and the energy which accompanies it

⁹⁵ *The Introduction of Cotton*, <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-2087>, (Accessed January 5, 2011).

have not destroyed an atmosphere of leisurely courtesy and friendliness which ever characterized Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County in making visitors welcome and encouraging their return.⁹⁶

The spiritual history of northeastern North Carolina figures greatly into the character of the people of this region going back to early colonial times when the planting of churches had a considerable influence upon the society at that time.

According to colonial records, the earliest of churches of the Baptist denomination dates from 1721, when the Shiloh Baptist Church, in rural Camden County, was established. Shiloh is one of the oldest Baptist congregations in colonial America and the mother church to at least one hundred congregation scattered across the Carolinas and Virginia. Before this, however, the Quaker movement gained an early foothold with transplants from Pennsylvania and New England. The landed-gentry of the region primarily belonged to the Anglican or “The Established Church”⁹⁷ What made the colony of North Carolina favorable to new church plants, especially in the Albemarle region, religious freedom of worship coupled with the political fallout of the inability of the colonial government to establish a state church until very late in the colonial period enabled the proliferation of churches of many faiths without government interference as Dr. Gurion Johnson explains:

The religion of the gentry in the coastal plain was, for the most part, that of the Church of England, although the Baptists and Quakers also had a stronghold in

⁹⁶ John Elliott Wood, *A Brief Sketch of Pasquotank County*, Vol I: PASQUOTANK HISTORICAL SOCIETY YEAR BOOK (Elizabeth City, NC: Chamber of Commerce of Elizabeth City, 1953). pp. 8-9.

⁹⁷ Gurion Johnson, *Ante-Bellum North Carolina: A Social History* (Chapel Hill, NC: THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA PRESS, 1937), 118, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/johnson/chapter1.html> (accessed November 5, 2010), p.18.

this region. In the back country were to be found Baptists, Presbyterians, Quakers, Lutherans, and Moravians. The colonial governors were never able to obtain the legislation necessary for the proper support of the Church. In fact, the quarrel over a vestry act acceptable to the Crown left the clergy without support, and it was not until Governor Tryon's administration in 1765 that conditions began to improve. Even then, support of the Established Church was to be short-lived, for the Constitution of 1776 forbade the "establishment of any one religious Church or Denomination in this State in Preference to any other."⁹⁸

Much of what may be observed in styles of worship in the Albemarle region across denominational lines has its roots from colonial times. There seems to be a resistance to the acceptance of contemporary forms of worship. This might be explained by one writer who asserts the following when explaining the peculiarities of worship styles of blacks and a prevalent Native American population, the Lumbee Indians, who also have a presence in the Albemarle region:

Historians have shown that the Quaker and Baptist denominations had great influence in eastern North Carolina, unlike many other parts of the South, where the Anglican church had a stronger foothold. Baptist and Methodist missionaries also traveled to the South from New England in the mid-eighteenth century, and likely brought many of the Puritan singing traditions with them. The decentralized structure and worship form of the Quaker and Baptist churches lent themselves to a similar style of improvisational and spontaneous singing.⁹⁹

The Impact of the Great Awakenings Upon the Region

From a spiritual viewpoint, events over the wider scene paralleled developments in other colonial regions during the days of the American frontier movement. Baptists, along with Methodists, experienced dramatic growth as reflected in the number of their

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Malinda Maynor, "Musical History Influences On Lumbee Hymn-Singing," <http://www.unc.edu/...mmaynor/musical/influences.html> (accessed November 22, 2010).

respective churches which began during this time. From 1776 to 1860, Baptist churches in America grew from 380 in number to 11,221. This exponential growth of Baptist churches continued to 1950 where they numbered more than 77,000 churches.¹⁰⁰ According to Ed Stetzer, “The planting of new churches occurred at a rate that is almost unbelievable, especially because the blitz of church planting had no central hub.”¹⁰¹ Part of this moment affected the region of study. Perhaps the most significant growth in terms of the number of churches planted occurred roughly during the Second Great Awakening which occurred during the early part of the nineteenth century.¹⁰² Elmer Towns writes of this movement that “in America, the revival transformed an entire society. By the 1820s, evangelical Christianity had become, as one historian notes, “one of the most dynamic and important cultural forces in American life.” Just as the First Great Awakening had shaped the character of an emerging nation, so the Second Great Awakening renewed that character and energized the church for the unique challenges of the century just begun.”¹⁰³ The impact of the Second Great Awakening continues to have a strong influence upon this region of study; especially upon the character of its people.

¹⁰⁰ Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, at: “1566-71,” Kindle Edition.

¹⁰¹ Stetzer, *Viral Churches*, at: “964-969,” Kindle Edition.

¹⁰² This was another branch of the old Kehukee, and was organized with 18 churches, containing upwards of eighteen hundred members in 1806. David Benedict, *A History of Baptists in North Carolina*, (<http://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.html/document/csr05-0361>) p. 1179.

¹⁰³ Elmer Towns and Douglas Porter, *Ten Greatest Revivals Ever* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Publications, 2000), p. 67.

Another element contributing to cultural attitudes came from the vast Quaker and Primitive Baptists who settled in this region in the early 1700s. As mentioned above, these denominations were granted religious tolerance and thrived here, and their presence is strongly noted to this day. It is from these two groups that the strongest influences seem to pervade upon the cultural ethic; even down to the design of the old church buildings and meeting houses. There is a strong Quaker influence that is prevalent in the design of the older Baptist and Methodist church buildings constructed in that period and later. Primitive Baptists, belonging to the Kehukee Association, also retained a strong influence in the Albemarle region. The Kehukee Baptists were very strong on their stance of frowning upon active evangelism and missions work in general. Many of the region's primitive Baptist churches are now closed but their descendents are actively participating in Southern Baptist churches. It is the author's observation that because of this pervasive influence, this may well account for some of the stiff resistance to evangelism, missions, and church planting efforts of today. There were other odd or primitive remnants observed in many Baptist congregations of that period. Some did not feel it appropriate, for example, that men and women would sit together in worship, and would sit in segregated benches. Separate doorways were also constructed through which males and females would enter and exit.¹⁰⁴

The facts are mentioned here not just to point out the similarity of architecture but to illustrate the similarity of cultural attitudes, particularly among the early white settlers

¹⁰⁴ "New York Landmarks Conservancy Common Bond."
[http://www.sacredplaces.org/PSPInfoClearingHouse/articles/Quaker percent20Meetinghouse percent20Architecture.html](http://www.sacredplaces.org/PSPInfoClearingHouse/articles/Quaker%20Meetinghouse%20Architecture.html) (accessed November 22, 2010).

of the region and passed down to their descendants still living in this region. Most of these attitudes are quite positive, such as simplicity, devotion to work, devotion to family, quiet, soft-spoken manner and aversion to ostentatious behaviors are values common to both Quakers and Baptists of this region. There is a certain friendliness and hospitableness, and as described earlier, a genteel character is also found of the general indigenous population, but to a point. It is the author's observation, as is hoped to be born out in research shown later, that there also seems to be a prevalence of a certain "tight-lipped" manner of people of this region that often refuses to volunteer information of a personal nature to strangers as well as a reluctance to associate with those whom they do not know well. This apparent "backwardness or perhaps more accurately described as reserved nature of the general character of the people living in this region was taught through the generations and reflects itself in terms of social distance with, perhaps, the reluctance to accept newcomers and outsiders. Close family connections are still valued and highly guarded- adding to the perception of exclusiveness toward the new additions to the community.

In spite of the apparent disdain for new methods of church life, church multiplication, (although perhaps not understood in such terms) was an essential strategy in the eighteen and nineteenth centuries, and it enjoyed much success-particularly among the Methodists and Baptist denominations in the region. This was essential because while in the early eighteenth century the population was much smaller than it is today, it was also growing. Geographically, the further away that the population moved away

from the mother church, the more necessary it was to plant another church.¹⁰⁵ Today as modern mass transportation and communication bring people into this swampy, tidewater region, one thing has not changed and that is the necessity for new churches to reach its surging population which has increased by one-fourth since the year 2000.

This is not to say, however, that the spiritual soil was not necessarily receptive to the gospel message or to the movement of church planting. The social isolation and withdrawn manner of most of its original families have passed down this legacy to their descendants and seems to be an unshakable part of the culture.

The Present: Social Awareness and Challenge of Planting New Churches in This Region

G. K. Chesterton once said, “The man who lives in a small community lives in a much larger world ... The reason is obvious. In a large community we can choose our companions. In a small community our companions are chosen for us.”¹⁰⁶ This statement is relevant because it is often economic necessity that draws people together.

The people of the Albemarle region of northeastern North Carolina are now more diverse than in years past because of the influx of new residents settling into this very desirable location for retirement and commuting, and vacationing. However, the original residents have retained their much of their historic flavor. Most newcomers to the region

¹⁰⁵ Elders Lemuel Burkitt and Jesse Read, *A Concise History of the Kehukee Baptist Association* (Paris, Arkansas: The Baptist Standard Bearer, 2005), pp. 101-105.

¹⁰⁶ G.K. Chesterton, *Heretics*, *Christian Classics Ethereal Library*
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/chesterton/heretics.xiv.html> (Accessed December 29, 2010).

have found these people friendly, affable, accommodating, and genteel. However, the people are not highly emotional nor are they overly demonstrative in affection. One aspect of their culture does not place a high value on emotionalism or public displays of affection. This stems from the Quaker mentality passed down through the generations; even among the African American population who were not generally Quaker adherents. The Albemarle region of North Carolina has long been a desirable place for tourists and vacationers, especially in the Outer Banks. However, the changing global economic climate, which has made a significant impact upon the state, has also been felt in the Albemarle region, but in some ways significantly less than urban and industrialized areas of North Carolina. While much of the region is developing residentially, there has not been the anticipated economic development that some predicted. As some political and religious leaders have long had the perception that northeast North Carolina is “the red-headed, freckle-faced, step-child of the state;”¹⁰⁷ referencing an attitude that many of the people of the region feel about themselves in relation to the rest of the state and in particular, the state government. This is the attitude toward state government and the Raleigh-Cary oriented and central part of the state that the best of everything that the state has to offer in terms of economic assistance, state budgets for education, and better programs are retained where most of the state’s residents live, and the perception that the state’s government does not care that much for the people of the Albemarle. It is some distance from Raleigh, and until recently (2009) the region did not connect with a four-lane highway system to the state government. Indeed the region seems more culturally

¹⁰⁷ Jennifer Riley, *The Outer Banks Voice* (<http://outerbanksvoice.com/2010/10/27/spear-steinburg-diverge-on-economic-views>) (Accessed January 23, 2011).

and economically oriented to the Hampton Roads region of southeast Virginia where many residents commute the hour to ninety minutes drive where they work in the vast military complex, shipyards, shipping, retail, and other opportunities. Lower North Carolina property taxes have invited new residents from the Hampton Roads region along with the improved highway system shortening the time of the commute.

Having already expounded upon the biblical basis and need to plant new churches, and the mind-set or character study of the residents already noted, what has not yet been addressed is what is happening to the new residents of the Albemarle region. It is clear that while new residents are moving into the Albemarle region, but as the research may yet bear out, many of these new residents are reporting not finding a general acceptance and community in the existing churches. Some often report unfriendliness of members who grew up in these churches. Others find that the worship styles do not meet their needs or are not in keeping with the contemporary worship trends with which they are comfortable. Still others observe peculiar traditions that are not understood outside an exclusive or “tight-knit” group. Breaking into an existing group, as with any organization, is often difficult and these attitudes are not exclusively experienced in this context but widely experienced all over the country if not all over the world. Because of these factors, many would-be church goers simply elect to stay at home and find other things to do. Many newcomers from the north belonged to mainline Protestant or Roman Catholic churches, and are not used to “southern” culture and find the worship styles of Southern Baptists as antiquated or quaint. Still, a much larger group has never been reached with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. An Anglican church planter also

said “At heart, the reason for planting churches is simple: there are people who have not yet been reached by the gospel. Church plants are able to reach new people with the message of Christ because they are flexible, adaptable, hungry for growth, and willing to experiment with new ways of being the church in order to grow. An established church can enjoy the luxury of remaining stable; a church plant must grow or die.”¹⁰⁸

Understanding the geography assists church planters in indentifying the natural and man-made barriers that may hinder their work.¹⁰⁹ It is important to gather information and to know the people on many different levels. “The best source of information about the people is the people themselves. Therefore it is absolutely necessary that teams (of church planters) hit the streets, neighborhoods, and marketplaces and spend time meeting the people.”¹¹⁰ Payne states that this is the key to a successful church plant, as well as any successful Christian ministry, is contextualization. There are several contexts which must be explored such as demographics which are the human statistics of the region. It is critical to church planting. Contextualization involves communicating in such a way that effective understanding occurs. It specifically deals with communicating the gospel and the cultural expressions of life of the local church.¹¹¹

Rick Warren, legendary pastor and church planter in another social context, lends much understanding to the concept of geographic and cultural context from his

¹⁰⁸ Susan Brown Snook, *Reaching New People through Church Planting*, Anglican Theological Review (Jan 1, 2010), p. 10. *Review* 92, no. 1: 111-116. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed October 27, 2010).

¹⁰⁹ Payne, at: “2499-2504,” Kindle Edition.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., at: “2575-79

¹¹¹ Ibid., at: “2537-42,” Kindle Edition.

experience and comes to one conclusion about what needs to be done to reach the people within it,

The single most effective method for fulfilling the Great Commission that Jesus gave us is to plant new churches! Two thousand years of Christian history have proven that new churches grow faster, and reach more people, than established churches. The growth on any plant is always on the newest branches.”¹¹²

It is with this assertion that the author of this thesis will explore in greater detail a church planting strategy for the particular culture and region of northeastern North Carolina. The author will demonstrate the validity of this claim within his local context; and to explore the assertion shared by Ed Stetzer that “there is simply no better way to reach, teach, train, and send disciples out into the world than through churches that are planted with the intention of planting others. For churches and denominations that are plateau or declining, church planting is an indispensable ingredient for renewal and revitalization.”¹¹³

Lyle Schaller also makes the argument that the “central component of any evangelistic strategy should be to plant new churches.”¹¹⁴ He states “in any community in which (a) a substantial proportion of the residents do not go to any church and/or (b) there is a significant turnover in the population year after year and/or (c) as the number of residents is increasing, new churches will be organized. This is one of the lessons of American church history documented earlier. The number of congregations will rise as

¹¹² Rick Warren, cited in: Stetzer and Bird, at: “195-199,” Kindle Edition.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 15.

¹¹⁴ Lyle E. Schaller, *44 Questions for Church Planters*, (Nashville: Abington Press, 1992), p. 36.

the population grows. Newcomers will provide an attractive justification for someone to plant a new church. The existence of those residents who do not go to any church will challenge some church planters.¹¹⁵

A significant element that is not yet discussed and this is the element of the soil's fertility. Arment claims that as "your ability to share the gospel (is) dependent upon a person's heart condition...your ability to plant a church successfully is dependent upon your community's spiritual fertility as well."¹¹⁶ This may indeed be true as he continues,

Some communities are simply more spiritually fertile than others. These communities are practically begging for a new church. The people's hearts have been prepared, and the community leaders are accommodating. When the planter needs meeting space, businessmen offer their facilities for fee. When he needs remodeling done, Christian subcontractors become available. When the planter interacts with waitresses and bank tellers, they're willing to give the church a try. It's as if they're just waiting for a church planter to come along and start something... This is how it works in fertile places. People are practically asking for the church plant. They may not be saying the actual words...but they've been spiritually prepared to look for one.¹¹⁷

The Spirit of the Age and the Generation of the Millennial

The seed, the soil, and to some extent, the sower, has been discussed. However, an element not discussed to this point is the Spirit- or how the Spirit is moving in this age and measured by the impact of generational attitudes and particularly, the impact of an emerging generation of people in society so labeled as the Millennials. The Millennial

¹¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 33-34.

¹¹⁶ Arment, at: "348-52," Kindle Edition.

¹¹⁷ Arment, at: "348-52," Kindle edition.

generation is becoming the focus of the church growth genre what the Baby Boomers, and the Gen X generations were twenty and ten years ago, respectively. Thomas Rainer defines the Millennial generation as “a group of young people whose birth years range from 1980-2000.”¹¹⁸ This generation, says Rainer, “has edged out the Boomers (aka the Baby Boomers born 1946 to 1964) to become the largest generation in America’s history.”¹¹⁹ Millennials are characterized as a more diverse group than any previous American generation.¹²⁰, but also characterized,

As a rule, not focusing as much on self as they are on how they can make a difference... This one insight has enormous implications. Compare this attitude with that of the Boomers, a huge generation only slightly smaller than the Millennials. The Boomers have been largely self-absorbed and narcissistic. Imagine the change our nation could experience if the dominant attitude in America shifts from entitled to giving.¹²¹

Other characteristics of the Millennials are more hopeful and because they are much less focused on self, are determined to make a difference in their world. Rainer continues by saying,

Thus we have a generation of optimists unlike the Gen X members before them. The Millennials tend to be upbeat, positive, and happy. But they are realists as well. They know that not all is well with the world. The Boomer Generation knew that and protested it. The Gen X Generation knew that and was depressed about it. And the Millennials know that, but they have a role in changing it. If the G.I. Generation (1901-1925) is truly the greatest generation, then the

¹¹⁸ Thomas and Josh Rainer, *The Millennials* (Nashville, B&H Publishing Group, 2011), under “158-63,” Kindle Edition.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., at:“200-205” Kindle edition.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid., at:“247-52” Kindle edition.

Millennials may be the greatest generation, part two. We are optimistic about the Millennials because they are hopeful about themselves.¹²²

The Rainer's further expound upon the Millennial Generations tendencies to be more relational (this is the generation which spawned social internet communities such as *MySpace* and *Facebook*, are greater learners (pursuing educational opportunities at a frantic pace), and are looking less to religion than other generations before it.¹²³

This is the area that concerns...us. The first alarm for us was sounded when we saw the responses to the importance of religion and spirituality to the Millennials. We feared that this generation might be ant-Christian. In some ways, the responses were worse than our fears. At least someone who opposes Christianity has our beliefs and his or her radar. Most of the Millennials don't think about religious matters at all.¹²⁴

While there seems to be a greater proportion of Millennials not paying attention to matters of faith, it would appear that the ones which do have the propensity to make a tremendous impact— perhaps far greater than their counterparts in previous generations.

Millennial Christians are not content with business-as-usual churches. To the contrary, they will connect with churches only if those churches are willing to sell out for the sake of the gospel. The Millennial Christians abhor churches that focus inwardly...and will commit themselves to churches. But those churches cannot look like and act like most American churches today. The Millennial church will be a radically committed church.¹²⁵

Millennial Christians possess a greater need to be *missional* and *incarnational* as they live out their faith to respond to the needs of the community in which they live—not

¹²² Ibid., at: "408-412" Kindle Edition.

¹²³ Ibid., at:"448-52," Kindle Edition.

¹²⁴ Ibid., at: "455-458," Kindle Edition.

¹²⁵ Ibid. at: "3659-63," Kindle edition.

just viewing their “community as little more than a population pool from which growth in attendance and budget can come. But they will embrace churches that teach members to love the community.”¹²⁶

Millennial Christians also possess a deep desire to go deeply into Christian teaching- seeking to move as close to New Testament Christianity as possible.¹²⁷ “They have a deep hunger to learn more about Scripture. Diluted doctrine and anemic biblical teaching and preaching are huge turnoffs for most Millennial Christians.¹²⁸ So is lack of sincerity, honesty, and integrity. Millennials across the board value these three elements more highly than other generational counterparts. They “are looking for churches where the leaders are people of unquestionable integrity. Again they are not reacting to any negative situation as much as they are seeing how Scripture paints a portrait of a Christian leader.”¹²⁹

Another aspect about the Millennial generation is that they are marrying much later in life if at all; opening up another obstacle to the relationship with the local church which is by nature traditionally and biblically family-oriented. However, an important and interesting insight to note about Millennials is their loyalty and the value that they place upon family: not just any family, but “a connected family, no matter how that

¹²⁶ Ibid., at: “3740-45,” Kindle edition.

¹²⁷ Ibid., at: “3744-49,” Kindle edition.

¹²⁸ Ibid. at: 3749-53,” Kindle edition.

¹²⁹ Ibid., at: 3851-52,” Kindle edition.

family may look.”¹³⁰ While Millennials are in the early stages of creating their own families (because they are still young), “Nevertheless their expectations for marriage and children are high. Family values may well become one of the distinguishing marks of the Millennials.¹³¹ What they desire is a traditional family and rejecting the familial dysfunction that seemed to characterize families of two previous generations.

Another characteristic desire of Millennials is the need for guidance and mentoring.¹³² Jess Rainer says that this, combined with the desire for education, means that this generation “is teachable. Although we are confident, we are willing to learn. An experienced leader has value. Millennials understand this value, and we will listen to a mentor who has chosen to invest in us. However, we want a mentor who is willing to listen to us.”¹³³

Still another characteristic of this new generation, that grows somewhat out of its more relational element, is its desire to communicate. “We communicate unlike any other generation: through cell phone voice as well text messaging, email, and the internet through Skype and Facebook.”¹³⁴ This connection with technology will have some impact not only on the need for connectedness but also the expectation of this generation once they become connected in such a faith community.

¹³⁰ Ibid., at: “565-69,” Kindle edition.

¹³¹ Ibid., at: “589-591,” Kindle edition.

¹³² Ibid., at: “700-705,” Kindle edition.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid., at: “745-49,” Kindle edition.

Churches- especially new church plants that focus on building community and spiritual family connectedness-may hold a great appeal with this new generation of Millennials as they find in the church a base of inter-connectedness and inter-dependence. This may offset the negative or ambivalent attitude toward Christianity; for once authentic relationships are allowed to germinate and function, through the guidance and infusion of the gospel, the faith community may become more important community for the values that are taught within it.

Despite this detached, ambivalent attitude toward spirituality, and in particular, the Christian faith, this is no reason to be discouraged about this Millennial soil. If the new plant is focused on people of this generation, it is the author's contention, based upon the findings of Rainer and Rainer and others, that the positive benefits of cultivating this soil will more than outweigh the detriments of it or any other generation that is cultivated along with it. Furthermore, this is the generation will not only make the greatest impact upon society once they are won to Christ, but also this is the generation that will make the greatest impact over the greatest length of time. This is because they are not only younger who have the best of their lives before them, but who also have the greatest opportunity to impact their own generation as well as the ones which come after it. Again, Thom Rainer explains "Depending upon one's perspective as a Christian, these are either the best of times or the worst of times. One could, with good reason, lament

the reality of the large number of unreached Millennials. One could also look at this generation as a great mission opportunity for churches throughout the nation.¹³⁵

The author contends that every generation had positives and negatives to weigh in with relating the gospel in context. However, the soil that has been fallow for a long time and previously unimpacted by the gospel may have greater growth potential than the overly worked ground of previous generations if this Millennial generation does not become lazy or abandon the ideals that they seem to value at the present time.

This particular cultural aspect of what it means to be a Carolinian as well as being a “northeast North Carolinian” will factor into this as well. Both elements retain a general family-centeredness and love for their community, as well as a desire to help others who are in need. Indeed most of the residents across the generations young and old, reflect these values. In fact, much more seems to tie the people together than what distinguishes them apart. It is the author’s findings that northeastern North Carolina soil is one where a new church plant is likely to succeed and flourish as any other.

Other Aspects of Soil Conservation and Cultivation

Ben Arment contends that there is a tremendous need to cultivate the spiritual soil as thoroughly as possible. He also asserts that where churches or new plants fail or struggle when what is lacking is the proper need for the soil to be cultivated spiritually:

¹³⁵ Ibid., at: “3861-65,” Kindle edition.

There is another option that almost all struggling church planters fail to see. It's called cultivation. When a new church struggles year after year to see fruit from its activity, we should assume it's not quite time to plant. Instead, there is tilling, watering, and cultivating to be done...If you keep planting seeds that produce no fruit, you've either got bad seeds or bad soil. And because we know from Romans 1:16 that the gospel seeds are never lacking in power to save, it must always be the soil.¹³⁶

Arment continues to assert that one does not need to simply accept the fact of bad soil the way it is. He says, "I believe that the parable of soil types is not just descriptive. In other words, Jesus wasn't just telling us that sometimes it works out and sometimes it doesn't. Rather, the parable was *instructive*. That is, Jesus was telling us what to do when we find ourselves on tough ground. Why else would he go to such lengths to describe each soil type?"¹³⁷

At the same time, there exists another factor that has hardened the soil considerably for anyone in any geographic location. This is the perception by society, as one particular author states, that "Christianity has an image problem."¹³⁸ The new generation growing up within the indigenous population as well as the newcomer moving into the region has experienced this that basically an expression of faith that is devoid of the love and grace that Christ came to give. In other words, the soil has been leached of these necessary ingredients; making the soil somewhat of a hostile environment for the seed to take root and grow. What authors such as Arment and Payne would suggest in

¹³⁶ Arment. At: "432-37," Kindle edition.

¹³⁷ Ibid., at: "438-43," Kindle edition.

¹³⁸ David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *Unchristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Mi: Baker Books, 2007), p. 11.

terms of cultivation they do not specify entirely, but this author proposes that a very thorough job of education and awareness of the need for church planting begin at the level of pastoral leadership of local existing churches, and in some cases, in denominational leadership on the local level. Arment suggests that part of cultivation is to know how, where, and when to cultivate new churches. He continues by saying, “If we were meant to be faithful in sharing the gospel, why would we have to know the reason for bad soil? Why would Jesus give us this insight if we weren’t supposed to do something about it?”¹³⁹ Cultivation, says Arment, comes before sowing.¹⁴⁰

The Beginnings of Cultivation: Building the New Work Ministry Team

Dave Early, professor of evangelism and church growth at Liberty University, recently wrote:

Throughout history, the birthing of new churches has carried the hope of the prevailing church to a lost and dying world. The conception of every newborn church is an affirmation that Jesus is still building His Church, and that His church will always prevail. When Jesus gave the Great Commission and the Great Promise, He forever linked church planting with evangelism. The church is the hope of the world!¹⁴¹

If Church planting is the hope of the world, then it is the responsibility of the New Work team of the Chowan Baptist Association to convey this hope to existing churches within it through a process of cultivation and education. However one may assume that the best place to begin this cultivation process is at least among the adherents of the

¹³⁹ Ibid., at: “447-51,” Kindle edition.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Dave Early, *Church Planting is the Hope of the World*, http://daveearly.net/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/Church_Planting_is_the_Hope_of_the_World.238114126.pdf, (Accessed Feb 1, 2011).

churches belonging to the denominations desiring or at least most capable of planting new churches. As this author belongs to a Southern Baptist congregation and is actively involved in the planting of churches in his local association, this author will concern himself with the cultivation of the soil to plant Southern Baptist congregations in the Albemarle region of northeastern North Carolina. The best tool for this cultivation process is to educate the leadership in Southern Baptist churches to the end that churches might be planted for the glory of God and for the extension of his kingdom.

Having been elected by the Chowan Baptist Association for the task of assisting its churches in goal of starting new works (a term designated by the association), it was the author's task to find a team willing to provide leadership in this area. An appeal went out to pastors and other associational leaders quite early in the process, but none responded. It was important, however, to find individuals at God's leading through prayer in this regard, and to individually approach such persons as demonstrated concern, interest, and talent in the enterprise of planting churches. This phase took many months—up to a year—to emerge into a team. Each individual selected to this point were also pastors who were also innovators in their own churches and worked hard to fulfill the Great Commission accordingly. Those who were selected were:

Jeffery Russell (age 50), team leader of the New Work team and pastor of Salem Baptist Church, Weeksville, North Carolina. Jeff has been in vocational ministry since 1983 and started his first church right out of seminary in a pioneer setting for Southern Baptists. He has also ministered in multicultural areas such as suburban Washington,

D.C. and in Hanau, Germany. He currently pastors a congregation that he hopes will come alive with new purpose and direction as he leads them to plant a church.

Richard (Rick) Lawrence (age 55), lead pastor, Nags Head Church, Nags Head, North Carolina. Rick is a seasoned church planter who re-started an existing church to be culturally relevant to the community he was reaching on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. When he arrived in 1989, Nags Head Baptist Church, as it was known then, was a declining small church of retirees. Rick, a southern California native and graduate of Liberty University, used the Purpose Driven model to accomplish a *re-plant*. He is also concerned to multiply his ministry in other church plants.

James Clark (age 72), pastor, Powells Point Baptist Church, Powells Point, North Carolina. Jim is a seasoned pastor who has done nearly all of his ministry in the Albemarle region; chiefly in Camden, Currituck, Pasquotank, and Dare counties. He knows the culture and language. As a U.S. Coast Guard veteran he also relates well to the military community and understands their needs. Jim recently became pastor of an old established church that has seen difficult times in recent years. Jim is treating this church as a *replant* and enthusiastically committed himself to the New Work team in order to get this church involved in the process of church starting in order to help revitalize this old church.

Dr. Winfield Bevins (age 35), pastor Church of the Outer Banks, came there to plant a brand new work in 2005, a Tennessee native, and is a graduate of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, North Carolina. Winfield is currently on the

New Work team as a consultant and formally become officially on the New Work team when his church is officially inducted into the Chowan Baptist Association (projected 2011). More will be discussed about Winfield later.

Another tool for the cultivation process was to enlist those persons who were most knowledgeable in the field of church planting and missiology and to act as resource person to coach or guide associational and church leaders. The first point of contact was the North Carolina Baptist State Convention office that employs a church starting strategist. His name is Frank White. In the initial conversation made with him, and then in subsequent meetings scheduled, White says that “one may assume that the sheer amount of data indicates that new churches are needed. However, while the data may convince some of the need to plant new churches, not everyone shares the sentiment that new churches are needed.”¹⁴²

White was also selected because of his excellent skills in forming relationships, particularly with church planters. One writer says “this is important because the new work coach should be a good listener. Offering ideas and suggestions will come later, but first learn what is happening in the church planter’s life. That way, guidance and expertise that will really help are right where they are. Diagnosing the needs of the new work team comes after knowing what is happening in the lives of the team members.”¹⁴³

¹⁴² Presentation to the Chowan Baptist Association Ministers Meeting, Dr. Frank White, NCBSA, Oct. 26 2010.

¹⁴³ Rodney Harrison, Tom Cheney, Don Overstreet, *Spin-Off Churches: How One Church Successfully Plants Another* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008), at: “2837-39,” Kindle Edition.

The New Work team began to work with Frank White as their church planting coach in virtually the same manner that a church planter would work with an individual church planting coach from a sponsoring church, but with some exceptions. The logistics alone would make it impossible for White to be on the field every week as his office in Carey, North Carolina, is some 200 miles away. Secondly, most of the leaders on the team had church planting experience on the local field and knew what was involved in planting churches. White would help this team to reach out to the existing churches to form advocacy of the cause of church planting to them.

The Challenge of Existing Churches

It will be necessary as part of the overarching strategy to get existing churches involved in the process of starting churches. Winfield Bevins, currently a non-official member of the New Work team, explains why existing churches should experience this role in a recent article:

- 1) Statistics show that it is much harder for traditional churches to reach the unchurched. Therefore, there is an even greater need to plant churches that reach the unchurched in our nation. Church planters are modern day missionaries to North America.
- 2) Planting culturally relevant churches in the 21st century is one of the best ways to reproduce disciples through rapid multiplication. It takes different kinds of churches to reach different communities and cities for Christ. We need churches that will reach urban, suburban, and rural communities.
- 3) (Existing churches) can help financially support a church plant. One of the greatest needs for church planting is finances. An existing church can collaborate with a new church plant by becoming a mother church that sends out a church planting team with funds. You can help pay a church planters salary for a year. Churches in a region or community can partner together to plant new churches in their area.

4) Existing churches can and should reproduce themselves by planting new churches.

Dr. White advised the New Work team that most of those adhering to existing churches and some even within the denominational framework sometimes perceive church plants as a threat to their livelihood; at least initially. There are many reasons for this. Sometimes new church plants serve as a morbid reminder to existing churches that death may be on the horizon for some of them. Even so, they need not perceive church planting and planters as a threat. Church planting may even encourage existing churches to *replant* as some have done. Once again, Bevins says,

A (final) way for churches to get involved with church planting is through replanting or church revitalization. Replanting happens when a church that is in decline or dying decides to face the music and dare to start over again for the sake of advancing the gospel. This will require churches to be willing to create a new identity, empower new leaders, and reach new people for Jesus. It will probably mean that a church sell their building and put that money back into church planting.¹⁴⁴

Some will not accept that church planting, as a deliberate means of reaching people for Jesus Christ has a biblical precedent. Many of these ideas were taught and emphasized at the early part of the twentieth century and embraced by the middle of the same century, and seem entrenched as the century ended to the point that church planting does not serve (at least in the minds of people belonging existing churches) a relevant need.

One of the obstacles that church planters are having to overcome in some areas is the emphasis of denominational or church “comity.” While virtually unknown in

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

Southern Baptist life, the attitude of minimizing congregations or sizes of congregations seems to be prevalent in the Albemarle area. Comity is explained as such as

A means of (a) minimizing number of congregations organized by the participating denominations, (b) perpetuating the obsolete dream that people choose a church on the basis of its geographical proximity to their place of residence, (c) undercutting the attraction of denominational affiliation, and (d) reinforcing the ancient notion that every congregation should have its meeting place located at the center of what would be a geographical parish, rather than in a highly visible and easily accessible locations¹⁴⁵.

Some resistance to new church plants by existing churches has to do with the perceived frustration existing churches feel with their inability (or perhaps unwillingness) to reach their communities for Christ. Many cry at this point, “We can’t fill up the pews of the churches that we do have. Why should we plant new churches?” This understandable objection is an attitude that many existing church leaders experience as they begin to lose touch with relevancy.

Frank White also offered his help to bring into the process to help with the strategy formation by the enlistment of a church planting network called *Plant NC*. *Plant NC* advocates the rich heritage of pioneer church planting by bringing church planting back to the local church. Will Plitt, *Plant NC*'s executive director, met with the author and associational missionary to discuss strategy ideas and concerns. The purpose of consulting *Plant NC* was to have a more localized strategist who could fill in gaps where White would be able to function as the visionary; Plitt would be more “hands-on.” Plitt explained that in the educational process of cultivation, the local church or groups of

¹⁴⁵ Kevin Mannoia, *Church Planting: The Next Generation* (Bryn Mawr, PA: Clements Publishing, 2005) p. 35.

churches are essential, and that as a resource, the church planting network is only a tool and they do not do the work for you. As Steve Timmis and Tim Chester also underscore this fact as they explain, “There cannot be mission apart from the local church. The local church is the agent of mission. This is the context in that people are discipled. There can be no sustainable Christian mission without sustainable Christian communities.” The Great Commission cannot and should not be stewarded by *parachurch* organizations, denominational agencies, or even networks. In fact, Stetzer argues “the less a church is tied to its denominational church-planting structures the more likely it is to aggressively plant churches.”¹⁴⁶

Steve Timmis and Tim Chester, in their popular work *Total Church*, add, “For Paul mission meant planting churches. In the New Testament, wherever the gospel was preached, local churches were established.” As Timmis and Chester explain, “The New Testament pattern of church life implies a regular transplanting of churches . . . Church planting is part of normal church life.” When the Great Commission is authentically and aggressively embraced, the natural and normal outcome ought to be newly made disciples who gather together in newly formed churches by Christians living on mission together.

Population and Demographics

Plitt suggested that another aspect to the cultivation process is to gather as much data as possible. He pointed out some very important resources that he uses to train church planters in the *Plant NC*. He suggested the North Carolina Partnership on

¹⁴⁶ Steve Timmis and Tim Chester, *Total Church*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2008), p. 7.

Economic Development (NCPED), and as it pertains to the region, the Northeast Division of this organization. The NCPED's purpose, as stated in their website, is

NCPED strives to improve the economic well-being of North Carolina residents through expanding the tax base and creating better paying, high-skilled jobs; have a seamless process of promoting North Carolina for investment and job creation; encourage the involvement of the private sector in economic development; and promote information sharing among regional partnerships to promote their overall effectiveness.¹⁴⁷

The reason Plitt suggested this organization, instead of the raw data available from the census bureau, is that the NCPED works with the census data and interprets it for business purposes and can cite trends and makes regular reports as to the movement in population in virtually every community. All of the cities, towns, and other seat of government use them to pinpoint population growth and economic growth as a result.

As of this writing, the 2010 census is not available. But based upon the 2000 census, the region of northeast North Carolina is growing. This region is also generally known as the Albemarle region- the counties surrounding the Albemarle Sound. It is largely underdeveloped farmland and wooded areas, with heavy tourism in the Outer Banks region along the coastal barrier islands. The population, however, increases with steady growth each year, as does the number of those belonging to non-evangelical churches or claiming no church membership. According to the latest census records, those claiming no adherence to any religious group is rising significantly. One writer reports that "the South is seeing significant immigration, particularly from the Northeast

¹⁴⁷ North Carolina Partnership for Economic Development, <http://ncped.com/mission.html> (Accessed November 8, 2010).

states. Population numbers for Anglos, African Americans, Asians, and Hispanics are all growing. Church attendance is also growing. Unfortunately, for each of the three major Christian branches, the population grew faster than attendance growth.”¹⁴⁸ The author is reasonably confident that this statistic bears true in the Albemarle region, however, Olson observes that while church attendance may be increasing in areas in the South where the population is also increasing, this does not necessarily mean that Southern Baptists are reaching them or that Southern Baptist church attendance is rising accordingly.

Addressing this concern, Olson continues:

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) illustrates the challenges churches face in keeping up with population growth. Nationally Southern Baptists are keeping up with population growth. That is not the case in the South, however, because of the region’s rapid population growth. From 2000 to 2005, the Southern Baptists grew by 5.6 percent in attendance in the Southern states. Unfortunately, the population growth rate was 7.1 percent in those states, causing the SBC to decline in its attendance percentage.¹⁴⁹

David Olson also cites factors such as what he terms “millennial decline.” He describes this term in reference to population studies,

Where the yearly numeric attendance growth in each region from 1990 to 2000 and from 2000 to 2005. The yearly rate in every region from 2000 to 2005 was lower than the 1990s rate. The yearly growth rate from 2000 to 2005 in the South and West was half as much as in the 1990s. The yearly decline rate in the North and Midwest was twice as high as in the previous decade. This reflects the more challenging environment facing churches in every region in this new millennium.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ David T. Olson, at: “1125-1128,” Kindle edition.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., at: “1130-35,” Kindle edition.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., at: 1167-73,” Kindle edition.

However, what Olson only measures is the church attendance in established or existing churches of that period that may leave out the populations of churches that are considered new plants- where obviously the attendance would in the very least offset what was reported in the established churches or show some increase.

The Spirit: Factors Mitigating Against Church Life and Spread of Faith in the Region

What has not yet been dealt with is the element of spirit that permeates the cultivation process. When one speaks of spirit, however, one may not always assume it is the Holy Spirit. The spirit of this age also works in this world and presents many challenges to the church planter. “The Bible provides an explanation: *Regarding them: the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers so they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*¹⁵¹ This writer contends that there is nothing wrong with the power of the gospel message, but that “the Holy Spirit still actively convicts of sin, truth, and righteousness. But we need to recognize that we have an enemy, the god of this age, who has the ability to blind the eyes of the unbelieving to the truth of the gospel,” (2 Corinthians 4:4 NKJV)¹⁵² Part of this spirit of the age, nipping at the heels of church life where the element of spirit is concerned is *postmodernism*. Some believe that postmodernism is “a culture of two minds, a culture unable to make up its mind one way or the other. But postmodern culture is of ‘one mind.’ It’s complexity (not simply) a mind that likes to go in different directions at the

¹⁵¹ Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer, *Spiritual Warfare and Missions* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2010, under “963-67,” Kindle edition..

¹⁵² Ibid.

same time.”¹⁵³ Sweet also continues to say, “Double vision is crucial for strategizing during times of immense change. Double vision is a diagnostic that can help churches and individuals think about their attitudes, their directions, and the capacities.”¹⁵⁴ For this thesis, the “double vision” will be viewing the existing churches as they respond to newly planted churches as well as to track the success (or failure) of the newly planted churches in the region of study. This “double ring” as Sweet coins it, “is more than a metaphor; it’s a strategy for ministry. Strategy needs to be a verb, not a noun; strategy is something you “do,” not something you “have.” What the church “does” strategically is take ministry to the edges, not to the center and then finds best-of-both-worlds solutions.”¹⁵⁵

The Chowan Baptist Association encountered this postmodern spirit in all nine of its counties to some degree. This association of churches is located in the northeastern region of North Carolina; covering at time of writing sixty-seven churches in a vast expanse of counties: Chowan, Perquimans, Pasquotank, Camden, Currituck, Dare, Hyde, Tyrrell, and Washington. It is a very historic Baptist association of churches dating back in its current location to 1806. The oldest Baptist church in North Carolina, Shiloh Baptist Church, is located there. The approximate population for the entire region is about 200,000 (191772), yet it covers ten counties, spanning a vast area of the northeast corner of the state.

¹⁵³ Leonard Sweet, *Aquachurch*, (Loveland Colorado: Group Publishing, 1999) p. 136.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

What Constitutes a New Work?

The New Work team of the Chowan Baptist Association established a vision in 2005 to “become involved with at least one new church start each year for the next ten years.”¹⁵⁶ However, there was never an attempt to qualify those new church starts in terms of what constituted a church start or even what was understood as a new work. This author stresses the importance of defining what constitutes a new work so that its mission is clear.

Aubrey Malphurs defines church planting “as an exhausting, but exciting venture of faith that involves the planned process of beginning and growing new local churches, based on Jesus’s promise and in obedience to his Great Commission.”¹⁵⁷ Consequently, the New Work team came to understand itself as a small committee that would relate to bodies that applied to the Chowan Baptist Association for membership. This included older, existing congregations previously outside the fellowship of the association but wanted to become part of it- such as the Knotts Island Baptist Church that had been in existence since 1876 as a congregation under the auspices of the Norfolk Baptist Association, the Baptist General Association of Virginia, and more recently, the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia. The church desired to be more closely identified with North Carolina since it lay directly within the border of that state. Other examples

¹⁵⁶ Chowan Baptist Association website: <http://www.chowanbaptist.org/?action=getpage&page=6357>. (Accessed February 8, 2011).

¹⁵⁷ Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), at: “128-34,” Kindle edition.

surfaced as to what may also qualify as “new work.” A large contingent of an established congregation recently split and began meeting. Even though its vision was to endeavor to fulfill the Great Commission in a manner in which the older church had not; the tone somewhat poisoned and broken relationships of that new work seemed to become the unwitting focus of the new congregation. When the “new work” sought counsel and guidance from the association, it placed the associational leadership in a precarious position with the church from that the “new work” split: how to keep good relationships with that congregation (that had heavily supported the Chowan Association for a hundred years) while trying to accommodate the new work?

The Need to Contextualize

Bird and Stetzer say “not since the pioneer days of settling the west has this country seen such an emphasis in church planting¹⁵⁸ The New Work leadership team decided at this time to define what constitutes a new work. One of the items that confronted it from the outset was the biblical basis (or lack thereof) in support of church planting *per se*. One author assumes the dilemma as he poses the question the question: “Why is there so much talk about church planting if there is no scriptural mandate? Though there is no direct command to plant churches, our Lord was very clear about the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations. The best way to fulfill this mandate of

¹⁵⁸ Ed Stetzer and , Warren Bird *Viral Churches* (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 2010) at: “475-79,” Kindle edition.

evangelizing, baptizing, and teaching obedience is through the planting of contextualized churches. For it is in the process of evangelizing, baptizing, and teaching that local churches are planted.”¹⁵⁹ The New Work team offered this definition to their purpose of church planting: “New work ought to be determined as a new congregation planted in a community where there is no evangelical witness or identity and contextualized to reach its respective people group with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

However, the Chowan Baptist leadership team of the association also had various ideas about what ought to constitute a “new work.” Several were concerned that since a number of churches already had sufficient empty pews and parking areas, it would be redundant to start new works, especially in this “bad economy.” There were scarcely the resources to keep the existing churches going and meeting their budgets, said others; beginning new works would be poor stewardship.

The Spirit

As point for educating the clergy to embrace a right attitude toward church planting, It is the author’s observation, as well as concern, that there seems to be a lack of awareness for the need for new churches among the leadership of the churches. This gave the Spirit more opportunity to work through the New Work team to help educate and illumine the minds of the recalcitrant. The lack of awareness may be unintentional or perhaps deliberate. Unintentional, because clergy called to existing churches have

¹⁵⁹ J.D. Payne, at: “354-59,” Kindle edition.

“their plates full” and are occupied and, in many cases, over-extended to meet the demands of the established churches and their very busy church calendars. There may not be the time or the energy to devote to developing an awareness of the need for new churches. Many pastors and church staff members of Southern Baptist congregations often look to the missionary organizations of their churches-particularly the Women’s Missionary Union-to promote missions awareness. Yet few of these church staff members, including the senior pastors, participate actively with this educational process except to be called upon to lead in prayer or provide devotion at a WMU-sponsored activity. There may also be a deliberate effort for Southern Baptist not to instill awareness of this need. Some pastors feel a subtle threat that creating new congregations in another location would detract from the ministry of their existing churches.

If new churches are to be planted, the *missionary burden* must be instilled into the framework of existing churches and consequently, by the churches that they plant.

Samuel Faircloth maintains that,

The early church knew little of isolated converts drifting from a local church fellowship...the express purpose of evangelists and apostles during the apostolic age was to see local churches planted in ever increasing numbers all over the known world. They were not preoccupied, as are so many today, with doing evangelism that took no practical thought of what would become of converts. This missionary burden for the planting of the church was born of the Spirit. Jesus shared the prophetic pattern for his world mission in Acts 1:8.”¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰ Samuel D. Faircloth, *Church Planting for Reproduction*, (Grand Rapids, Mi: Baker Book House, 1991), p. 19.

The compulsion to “be my witnesses” is in obedience to Christ’s command in the Great Commission.¹⁶¹ Additionally, Faircloth points out that “as in the church in Thessalonica, the joy of the Holy Spirit experienced in true conversion to Christ causes a congregation to “sound forth” the Word of God to *new places* (author’s italics).¹⁶²

Furthermore, Payne contends that “Biblical church planting follows the way modeled by Jesus and imitated by the Apostolic church for global disciple making. It is a methodology and strategy for bringing in the harvest, raising up leaders from the harvest, and sending leadings to work in the harvest fields. It *is* evangelism resulting in congregationalizing.”¹⁶³ Stetzer also contends that “the whole New Testament is saturated with the idea of church planting, especially in the book of Acts.”¹⁶⁴ He also parallels Payne, with qualification, that “multiplicative church planting is evangelism”¹⁶⁵, stating that “church planting is the dominant method of evangelism in the book of Acts, and the key to spreading the Gospel to every people group or population segment, large or small, in every corner of the planet.”¹⁶⁶

Faircloth also makes the assertion that church planting is a natural outgrowth of mature church ministry. The goal, he says, is to create an awareness of,

¹⁶¹ Matthew 28:18-20NKJV.

¹⁶² Faircloth, p. 20.

¹⁶³ Payne, at: “366-69,” Kindle edition.

¹⁶⁴ Stetzer, *Viral Churches*, at: “532-537,” Kindle edition.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

This inherent urge to see new congregations come into being is not only the result of the Spirit's ministry in Christian converts; it is also explained in another analogy- that of adulthood. Even though our society consists of many childless marriages, the very existence of the human race depends upon what we may legitimately call the normal birth of new lives. Having children is a natural part of life. How does this relate to church planting? Normal New Testament experience is to make disciples, to win converts, to have a family, and to gather this family in a common bond. This is precisely what the apostles and successors did. Experience teaches us that evangelism is the missionary framework without reproduction becomes a dead end. In Christian circles, such failure (to produce spiritual offspring) could be rightly considered to be corporate selfishness and disobedience. Those who truly love the Master obey Him.¹⁶⁷

Why Plant New Churches?

Aubrey Malphurs says “A careful reading of Acts reveals that the early church implemented the Great Commission mandate primarily by planting churches.”¹⁶⁸ Church planting involves all of the elements of fulfilling the Great Commission. This is conditioned upon planting churches that result from Christians invading a culture, preaching the gospel, baptizing believers, and training them to live for Christ. Ed Stetzer says that New Testament Christians acted out these commands as any spiritually healthy, obedient believers would; they planted more New Testament churches.”¹⁶⁹

Many churches have lost a church planting emphasis” says Ed Stetzer, “because they think it is no longer needed. After all, the thinking seems to be, there is a church on

¹⁶⁷ Faircloth, p. 20.

¹⁶⁸ Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004) at: “400-05,” Kindle edition.

¹⁶⁹ Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, at: “1027-31,” Kindle edition.

every street corner, and most of them are empty.¹⁷⁰ Don't we already have enough churches? Don't we simply need to direct spiritually hungry people to those existing churches?" In answer to this, Stetzer says:

That this sounds great in theory but in reality it often does not work. New people are less likely to go to existing churches. Maybe they're overwhelmed by the prospect of breaking into the culture of an existing congregation, especially if it's a long-standing group now in decline. Or perhaps outsiders have stereotyped existing churches, even if wrongly, deciding that they're not relevant enough to today's culture. Maybe the church's reputation pushes them away. Certainly some have been scarred by a negative experience. Whatever the case, churches are seeing unique doors that a new church can often open and they are seeing the need for church planting again.¹⁷¹

The latest report on church attendance in the US shows that only 17.5 percent of the American population attends church on any given Sunday. In this report, David Olsen also points out that the American population has grown, while the total number of churches in America had actually declined,

According to the Religious Data Archives, there are only 139,791 evangelical churches in the US. With the American population topping the 300 million mark, this means there is only one church for every 2,200 people. This suggests that if every American wanted to go to a church on Sunday morning, there would not be enough seats to hold them. If we believe that people need the church, then we can only come to one conclusion – we need more churches!¹⁷²

Not only are there more people moving into the northeast North Carolina region, but the types of people relocating into the area is changing. Where, in times past, most of

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Stetzer, at: "343-345," Kindle edition.

¹⁷² David Olson, at: "2347-2350," Kindle edition.

the newcomers have been white, middle-class, and higher income- this is no longer true, and resembling the racial and sociological makeup of the populations of larger urban centers. As missiologist Charles Chaney observes,

America will not be won to Christ by establishing more churches like the majority of those we now have.”⁵ In an increasingly multicultural and urban society at least four types of people do not fit into traditional homogeneous churches: interracial couples and families;⁶ ethnic people who prefer speaking English; urbanites who “appreciate living, working and ministering in the midst of ethnic diversity”; and Generation-Xers who often despise racial separatism.⁷ It will take new multicultural churches to reach these groups. In the past, homogeneous churches have been seen as the most productive, but in the present social milieu that is changing. Now residents of highly educated, high income, racially mixed communities are often attracted to interethnic heterogeneous churches.⁸ So are many second, third, and fourth generation immigrants as well as those living in ethnically changing urban neighborhoods.¹⁷³

This phenomenon is especially true in the region of study. Most people who currently belong to the local existing Southern Baptist churches see nothing wrong with themselves nor do they perceive a need to change. While they would not purposely prohibit newcomers from entering into their churches, they subconsciously do not roll out the red carpet either.

The New Work team shares and reinforces Dave Early’s contention that “New churches are amazingly more effective at reaching lost people than existing churches.”¹⁷⁴ This also reflects upon what C. Peter Wagner says in his book *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest*: “The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is

¹⁷³ Ken Davis, *Multicultural Church Planting Models*, The Journal of Ministry and Theology (Spring 2003) p. 114. http://www.bbc.edu/journal/volume7_1/Multicultural_Church-Davis.pdf. (Accessed February 8, 2011).

¹⁷⁴ Early, *The Desperate Need for New Churches*, p.2.

planting new churches."¹⁷⁵ He expounds on the same principle that this author projects by stating:

Not to make an explicit connection between evangelism and the local church is a strategic blunder. As the number of individuals who are evangelized increases, so also must the number of churches and variety of churches. The more harvest God gives us, the more barns and silos and grain elevators are needed. In any given geographic area, the Christian community will grow or decline according to the degree of effort given to planting new churches.¹⁷⁶

Quoting Win Arn at this point, Wagner continues by stating,

Today, of the approximately 350,000 churches in America, four out of five are either plateaued or declining... Many churches begin a plateau or slow decline about their fifteenth to eighteenth year. 80-85 percent of the churches in America are on the down-side of this cycle. Of the 15 percent that are growing, 14 percent are growing from transfer, rather than conversion growth.¹⁷⁷

For North Carolina Baptists, recent NAMB research also demonstrates that populations attending evangelical churches are declining in northeastern NC.¹⁷⁸

The Objectives of the New Work Team

After formulating a philosophy for cultivation, the New Work team began to consider their objectives. These objectives did not become realized in earnest until new members of the team were enlisted, initialized, and immersed in their work. Up to that point, the author, as team leader, could not do this work effectively and for several months, there was very little to report. The author also knew that very few persons

¹⁷⁵ C. Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), p. 11.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ See appendix North Carolina Church 2.

demonstrated or would demonstrate interest until he sought the council of God in prayer. When he did, things began to happen. God began to work and the interest for new churches began to emerge in ways unknown to the members of the New Work team before this effort of prayer began.

Prayer Essential in the Strategy

Dr. Jerry Falwell once said: “Nothing of eternal significance ever happens apart from prayer.”¹⁷⁹ Prayer is an indispensable part of developing a strategy for starting churches and should never be assumed, marginalized, or discounted. Strategic prayer is an extremely important aspect to church planting. In fact, it ought to be regarded as even more important than community analysis study because it is through prayer that God acts and directs the church planting process. The results that were shared in the above paragraph only serve to underscore its importance. Putnam agrees that “prayer is an essential part of the conversion process for those outside the church. Like many missional strategies, churches that are impacting lost culture are teaching people the eternal importance of prayer.”¹⁸⁰ Payne stresses the importance of prayer even further:

For you to be effective in church planting, prayer must precede your arrival on the field, saturate every step of the church-planting strategy, and continue for the new believers and churches after your team departs to plant other churches. The

¹⁷⁹ Jerry Falwell, cited in: Dave Early, *Church Parenting*, http://daveearly.net/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/Church_Parenting.23973540.pdf, (Accessed February 8, 2011).

¹⁸⁰ Ed Stetzer and David Putnam, *Breaking the Missional Code* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006) at: “2123-2125,” Kindle edition.

permeation of prayer throughout the ministry is of paramount importance to everything the church planter does. Church planters must be people of prayer.¹⁸¹

The New Work team then focused upon how they were going to incorporate and utilize prayer in the development of their strategy. As mentioned above, the team decided not to make prayer incidental to the task. As part of implementing prayer into the overall strategy, it was decided by the team members that they should do a prayer walk (or prayer drive) into areas within their area of responsibility where the Spirit has impressed them as most needful of perhaps most fruitful in the starting new work. Beginning in the initial stages, the four members were assigned to pray for the counties where they lived: Dare, Currituck, Camden, and Pasquotank (clearly the most populous areas in the Albemarle region) and then to report back on what the Spirit had impressed upon them with regard to the church planting in this activity. They were also to notify the NCBSB's church planting department that issues a regular email prayer update informing state convention churches on church planting opportunities for prayer. It was also decided that a fair amount of time would be allotted to discuss these findings and then to engage in prayer as a team during its meetings.

Areas of Responsibility (AOR)

The New Work team borrowed an abbreviation utilized by the military, most notably the U.S. Coast Guard, to define its jurisdiction or role. They called this *Area(s) of Responsibility*. The U.S. Coast Guard has a very strong presence in the region and Coast Guard Station Elizabeth City is the largest of the region's employers. The

¹⁸¹ Payne, at: "1144-1147," Kindle edition.

terminology is very familiar to most residents of the region. The New Work team considered some objections to its role in planting churches because some believe that “only churches start churches.”¹⁸² However, the New Work team is poised to serve as a great influence with a role to guide, instruct, and encourage existing churches to plant churches, as well as to encourage and provide advocacy and channel resources to church planters and new congregations. The New Work team is a leader in the area of church planting and hopes that existing churches will respond by sharing the vision for new congregations in the Albemarle region and increasing its *AOR*.

There are some who might object to an associational entity such as the Chowan Baptist Association. One reason they may be concerned is over the issue of control and support for the new work. However, Ed Stetzer, a Southern Baptist, weighs in considerably on this issue,

In my faith tradition, we believe in the autonomy of the local church, and we’re skeptical of outside ecclesiastical control. In most cases, however, I find that agency/denominational church starting is not about control; it’s about start-up. The Bible does not speak against the idea of people collectively gathering and sending out people to do the work of the gospel. Paul was not supported solely by the Jerusalem church, from which he went out of on his missionary journeys. Paul traveled and was supported by many different people and churches that he might do the work God had for him, and even had to support himself at times (Acts 18:3). Christians gathering resources and sending out works into the harvest is what God has called his people to do, and while local church government seems to be restrictive, the work of the gospel is not. But churches can, do, and should plant churches.¹⁸³

¹⁸² Kevin Mannoia, *Church Planting: The Next Generation* (Bryn Mawr, PA: Clements Publishing, 2005), p. 35

¹⁸³ Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, at: “1720-21,” Kindle edition.

What Type of Churches Should be Planted?

The New Work team also considered the type of church that ought to be planted in northeast North Carolina. Among the sixty-six churches that comprise the Chowan Baptist Association, only three congregations are focused on committed to reaching the Millennial or Boomer generations. With these three churches, two have multiple worship services offering traditional and contemporary styles of worship. Nags Head Church, where one of the team members, Rick Lawrenson, is lead pastor, is the only member church that exclusively focuses upon the postmodern generations in terms of outreach as well as style of worship. Nags Head Church had been a traditional church until Lawrenson basically “restarted” the congregation with its new focus. The Church of the Outer Banks, where Winfield Bevins is pastor, is currently under “watch-care” membership. Its style of worship and outreach focus is also what they consider “postmodern” and aimed at the Millennial generation. This congregation is, as was previously discussed, the only church with church planting in its “DNA.” However, the New Work team discussed at length that it was not worship styles or the programs that were essential but its ministry “DNA.” DNA, a term found in biology describing molecular determination, is also helpful in ministry describing its “core values, mission, vision, and strategy.”¹⁸⁴ The New Work team felt it essential to plant churches that has multiplication of churches in its DNA. Stetzer says: “Other churches tend to wait for some feeling of stability or preparedness before they consider planting other

¹⁸⁴ Malphurs, at: “2474-77,” Kindle edition.

churches...Church planting is good. A vision for church multiplication is better.”¹⁸⁵ The New Work team believes that northeastern North Carolina already has enough of the “traditional” type, program-driven churches. A greater emphasis needs to be centered upon planting new churches that are contextualized; focusing on the values of the Buster and Millennial generations. It is also worth considering a comment from Arment at this point who says,

I've been told that we can't have enough church plants in one city, that there are far too churches to reach everyone in a community. But this is dangerous advice. It assumes that everyone in town is immediately ready to start attending a church at any given time. But unfortunately they're not. The truth is, it is indeed possible to have too many churches if they're all the same kind of churches. In this case there will be winners, and there will be losers. Every church fulfills a distinct purpose in a local community. If your approach to doing church is the same as another church's approach, one church will clearly win out, and it's usually the one that can do it better.¹⁸⁶

Language and Ethnic Congregations

Considerable time has been spent in New Work team meetings trying to decide whether they ought to explore the prospect of beginning language and ethnic church plants as part of its *AOR*. One source stresses the importance of language congregations because,

Southern Baptists, once thought to be White, Anglo-Saxon, and Southern have grown to reflect the ever growing ethnic change in America. These new, ethnically diverse Southern Baptist congregations are committed to work with

¹⁸⁵ Stetzer, *Vital Churches*, at: “266-70,” Kindle edition.

¹⁸⁶ Arment, at: “1985-90,” Kindle edition.

fellow Southern Baptists to make disciples of *panta ta ethne*, —all the peoples of the world.¹⁸⁷

The questions New Work team members discussed were:

- 1) Do these populations have prevalent populations that are not already being reached?
- 2) Are there currently existing churches that have the interest and/or resources in reaching them?
- 3) Are there resources that the New Work team can find for these groups?
- 4) What priority should language and ethnic congregations have in the development of a strategy for church planting in the Chowan Baptist Association?
- 5) Will these congregations ultimately be able to support themselves and if so will they have *multiplicity* built into their *DNA*?

These were difficult questions to ponder for the New Work team, especially in light of their limited financial resources that will be discussed in the following section. However, the point was also stressed, as important as it was to understand the need for new congregations in other languages, what the New Work team priorities must be in terms of reaching those who are from the indigenous profile. One author weighs in considerably on this subject, reminding the author and the New Work team of its Scriptural mandate:

¹⁸⁷ *Evangelism and Church Planting in North America*, An Internal Study of the North American Mission Board : <http://www.namb.net/recentcmrupdates/> (Accessed February 12, 2011).

In fulfillment of the Great Commission, a commentary about the use of God’s evangelistic strategy is clearly given. The people that are gathered as a result of the Great Commission are people from every tribe, language, nation and race—that is, the world is segmented in a far greater and sophisticated way than geopolitical entities such as “nations.” This clearly identifies an evangelistic strategy that is sensitive to different people groups who have a cultural affinity with one another. This means that the average church that wants to obey and fulfill the Great Commission will look at its community and develop evangelistic strategies that are people-group sensitive.¹⁸⁸

Resourcing

The next item considered by the New Work team is resourcing. Resourcing is a broad, general term, but one the team used to describe those who could provide the best training and most meaningful help in terms of experience, leadership, coaching, procuring church planters and assistance with finance. The New Work team recognized that because they are busy pastors with needs in their own congregations that they would be very limited in terms of the time they could devote to this project themselves. They recognized very rapidly that they would need to have some help on the field to come along side and assist them. The New Work team considered, or at least studied the value of utilizing as many different sources as were currently available as were focused on planting churches in their particular region. The New Work team found a number of groups devoted to planting churches. Several were contacted. But the ones who proved most helpful in providing resources to the New Work Team began with the North Carolina Baptist State Convention church planting department. One of this group’s chief consultants, Dr. Frank White, proved extremely helpful to orient the New Work team and

¹⁸⁸ Towns, *Practical Encyclopedia of Church Growth*, p. 183.

their focus of church planting. This was helpful because it was difficult in the beginning stages to understand, much less orient and navigate through everything that the New Work team needed to do. What a coach is to a church planter, Dr. White has been to the New Work team. He also recommended that the New Work team consider certain groups dedicated exclusively to the ministry of church planting as networks such as *Plant NC*. This also helped them to understand their AOR or at least to define it. *Plant NC* is defined, according to their web site:

Plant NC is a network of likeminded churches, pastors, and church planters who are working together to advance the gospel across North Carolina and beyond by planting new churches and helping to strengthen existing churches for the purpose of multiplication. Our vision is to partner with established and new churches to plant 30 churches in the next three years. We seek to provide peer-learning communities, church planting internships, coaching, support, regional network opportunities, and resources to pastors and church planters from across North Carolina and around the United States.¹⁸⁹

In the *Plant NC* material in its handbook, it helped the New Work team to better understand their role,

Plant NC believes that the most natural place from which church planting should originate is the local church. Simply put, churches reproduce churches. If the work of church planting is outsourced to parachurch organizations, denominational entities, conventions, or even networks, then we are asking them to do for the church what they were neither authorized nor equipped to accomplish. The seed for church planting *should* find fertile soil in every gospel-centered church. Believing this to be true, *Plant NC* wants to bring the responsibility of church planting back to its most natural context. Because Christ has promised to build His church, we are committed to the expansion of His kingdom through church planting. Churches exist for Jesus Christ, and He is glorified when they are multiplied. We belong to Jesus Christ, and the Great Commission belongs to us; therefore, we are united to Him in pursuing the mission of God through church multiplication. Together, these realities fuel a

¹⁸⁹ Will Plitt, *Plant NC*, <http://www.plantnc.com/> (Accessed January 4, 2011).

passion for church planting and give a kingdom perspective knowing that we are stewards of the very purposes Christ has promised to fulfill to the praise of His glory.¹⁹⁰

Will Plitt, director for *Plant NC*, explained to the New Work team that while it almost appears that the church planting network is like doing “contract work” for the association, the impetus for enlisting the church planting network, rather than developing an “in house” strategy is, as the research will later suggest, is based on the premise that church planting networks are better equipped, understand the vision, and are highly competent in the field of church planting whereas most churches (at least the churches in the Chowan Association) are not.¹⁹¹ The existing churches tend to either operate independently of one another, or tend not to seek a close partnership with the denomination, or do not seem to understand the vision and need for planting new churches. As stated earlier, planting new churches appears to be a foreign concept not eagerly embraced by most churches in the Chowan association. In the past, at least within the previous twenty years, starting new churches consisted of assisting a church that had split from an existing church or facilitating an existing church that desired membership into the association. Other than this, the new church development team had little purpose and even lesser direction.

Another church planting network of which at least one of the New Work team members was familiar is the *Acts 29* network. Winfield Bevins, one of the team members, was originally assessed and commissioned as a church planter from this

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Will Plitt, Presentation of *Plant NC* to New Work team, November 6, 2010.

network and a teacher. *Acts 29*, based in Seattle, Washington, is aligned closely with Mark Driscoll's Mars Hill Church. They were the group that originally encouraged Bevins to move to the Outer Banks and plant a church. However, Bevins sought a closer support network, and initiated contact with Dr. White and the NCBSC. Bevins became aligned more closely with the NCBSC and helped Will Plitt and White create Plant NC.

Plant NC, as a church planting network well understood its vision, goals and purpose for the local context. Another reason for utilizing the church planting network, at least initially, was out of sheer frustration with the slow pace of progress, little vision, and even less knowledge of the mechanics of how to plant a new church. Of the churches that get attempt to start in the seven years the author has been part of the Chowan Association, none of them have survived beyond two years. Some did not make it two months. The New Work team felt it would be important to broaden the perspective beyond the leadership of the Chowan Baptist Association that had very little experience in successfully planting churches, and if the new church plants were to be successful, they would need to be in an environment of encouragement and advocacy in which the church planters would thrive. As one author stated, "church planting is always difficult, (and) is often perceived as an insult to the established church and its pastor."¹⁹² About this Charles Chaney also weighs in, saying: "there has been and continues to be

¹⁹² Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, at:"7120-26," Kindle edition.

an aversion to church planting on the part of many pastors, elders, deacons, and other local church leaders.”¹⁹³

The New Work team, while being appointed by the CBA, realized that the associational leadership was clearly not the ones most disposed to being in sympathy with the needs of church planters and mission of church planting. Besides having “other fish to fry,” many established church pastors perceive the whole enterprise as a threat as they struggle against the pressure to keep pews in their respective churches filled. The New Work team felt it best to tone down its criticism of established churches, however, hoping to win their support through prayer and loving advocacy and education. One author writes,

Just as the Lord has been gracious to us in our church-planting journey- sometimes, over many year- we must be gracious to others who are weighing the options of church planting for the first time. In some cases, you have been eating, drinking, and sleeping in the field of church planting for several years. The Lord has patiently allowed you to mull over the various theological and missiological matters for a long time. Make certain that you are sympathetic toward other kingdom citizens whenever you share your vision for making disciples, especially when others do not initially respond with the enthusiasm you desire. Remember, it is very likely your enthusiasm for church planting did not bubble up overnight. Even though some people oppose the idea of church planting, we must do it anyway- because it’s biblical.¹⁹⁴

In spite of these factors, following a biblical mandate is never easy. Christ has promised His power to carry it out, however. Designing a strategy is relatively simple. Finding the individuals or teams to plant churches is perhaps the most difficult part, but

¹⁹³ Chaney, p. 64. Also quoted in Dave Early’s article: *Church Planters Who Succeed*, <http://www.churchleaders.com/outreach-missions/outreach-missions-articles/138305-church-planters-who-succeed.html>. (Accessed Jan 9, 2011).

¹⁹⁴ Payne, at: “3993-96,” Kindle edition.

must at the team is committed to the task and faithful in prayer, the team knows that God will provide.

Paying for the Seed and the Sower: Financing the Church Plants

Another biblical aspect to the strategy of church planting is this quote: “take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep,” (Matthew 10:10NKJV). This implies that the gospel ministry is not only one of faith, but that the gospel ministry is going to cost something especially when one has dedicated himself to serving God in the area of church planting. As one writer succinctly put it, “One of the major problems in planting a church is financing the venture.”¹⁹⁵ The New Work team also considered how the new works, or church plants as they preferred to call them would be resourced and with what type of resourcing could the New Work team assist?

The most familiar type of (but not always the most helpful) resourcing is money. Realizing that the New Work team of the Chowan Baptist Association only has a budget of \$3,000.00 for the year 2010-2011, it was decided that the New Work team could only invest these very funds in the following ways:

Publications and media—to enhance the awareness of church planting within the Chowan Baptist Association.

¹⁹⁵ Malphurs, at: “3021-25,” Kindle edition.

Equipping—To fund training and equipping programs to aid the church planter(s), associational leadership, the New Work team, and other appropriate persons to participate in training programs in order to sharpen skills and become more productive in the mission of church planting. The New Work team may use its budget to send team members and/or prospective church planters to a conference if it would benefit church planting.

Coaching—the New Work team is aware that the *NCBSC*, *Plant NC*, and church planting trainers and resource persons (such as Frank White, Will Plitt, and others) have limited budgets themselves and must travel across the state to encourage other church planting efforts. They make themselves available after the introductory ventures on an honorarium basis. The associational New Work teams or counterparts in other places are expected to provide an honorarium and/or mileage.

The New Work team is to encourage other churches and ministries to get involved in the enterprise of church planting. It can be available to seek out funding at first, but must point the church planters and sponsoring churches to initiate the contacts themselves. This is a very “important step in nurturing new churches.”¹⁹⁶

At this juncture, Stetzer says that “churches that aggressively pursue church planting have a number of financial factors in common. Typically these churches expect new church planters to raise a sizeable amount of the church planting budget, commonly 50 to 80 percent. However, as has been mentioned, the majority of funding responsibility

¹⁹⁶ Malphurs, at:” 3169-72,” Kindle edition.

is trending toward the parent church and church planter as the source, with the denomination typically providing less than one-third of the needed funds.¹⁹⁷

Clearly, the New Work team is not immediately in a position even to provide the one-third recommended by Stetzer. He also says “large investments into few places means fewer plants and a lowered probability for a multiplication movement.”¹⁹⁸ Another factor is that it is difficult to set a fixed figure or budget how much a church plant can cost because “each situation is different because leaders plant churches in different places under different circumstances.”¹⁹⁹ Because of the obvious financial limitations, the New Work team is not in the financial position to offer salaries, stipends or any kind of meaningful compensation unless it is first approved by the Executive Board of the Chowan Baptist Association that could be called upon to provide additional funding if the need arises. For example, there have been NAMB and seminary sponsored short-term mission projects to help with church planting efforts such as the Nehemiah project, *PRAXIS* and other programs could lend a seminary student church planting team for a summer. They would need help with housing, meals, fuel and other expenses but would need Chowan Baptist Association churches to be involved in this effort also.

The limitations of finances notwithstanding, the New Work team may still offer some practical guidance with respect to the start-up costs of planting a new church.

Malphurs cites Dean Merrill of *Leadership* magazine as saying,

¹⁹⁷ Stetzer, *Viral Churches*, at: “2511-15,” Kindle edition.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Malphurs, at: “3170-72,” Kindle edition.

Mothering a new church is not as costly as we had expected. Few investments totaled more than \$25,000 (excluding real estate purchases). Many daughter congregations were started with as little as \$5000. Some start-ups required no money at all from the mother church treasury.²⁰⁰

Even though the finances are limited, there are other ways to resource new church plants. Another way is rethinking or helping those the New Work team will work with to “redefine the role of the church as a missionary church that is responsible for sending out apostles and lay apostles into the harvest field. If we are God’s sent people, we must assume the responsibility to send out our best leaders into the field.”²⁰¹

Other aspects of resourcing churches and church plants are through what one writer calls *partnership development*²⁰². The New Work team can develop partnerships with sponsoring churches and church plants in the following ways using the letter P acronym: Pray, Play (mission involvement), Pay (financial giving) and Parlay (being an advocate to bring along other partners).²⁰³

Prayer—a prayer strategy has already been mentioned. However, the New Work team also envisions that it can inform the association through email, the associational newsletters, and at associational gatherings important prayer needs for church plants and planters. Prayer enhances the awareness as well as opens hearts for God to work.

²⁰⁰Ibid., at: “3172-75;: Kindle edition.

²⁰¹ Stetzer and Putnam, at:.” 3909-15.” Kindle edition.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Stetzer, *Viral Churches*, at: “1398-04,” Kindle edition.

Play—through mission involvement, to encourage churches in the association (although not limited to them) to help with meaningful missions projects such as working an evangelistic survey, knocking on doors, providing VBS or children’s Bible club or activity personnel, block parties, singing groups- just to name a few to get people in the doors and to promote awareness of the church plant in any given area.

Pay—the aspects of finances have already been covered in the previous section. One aspect that has not been addressed is the stewardship development of a new church plant. The New Work team will need to give guidance as to how to open up a bank account and to set up accounting procedures. In the event that a sponsoring church does not know how to do this, the New Work team can send someone to help with this need.

Parlay—is the French word for speaking. Church planters will not only need encouragement through prayer but also will need people who they can talk to who will understand their needs and problems. The coaching staff can help out with this and address many questions and concerns the church planter or even sponsoring church might be facing. However, the church planter will need as many friends as possible whom they can count on for local support.

The Sower in Context: Finding the Right Church Planter to Sow the Seed in the Soil

The New Work team turns now to examining not only the need for cultivation of the soil but their role as a sower as well as the need to recruit other sowers in the field of evangelism through the biblical agency of church planting. Another reason for stressing the importance of prayer is the enlistment of the church planters to plant and to harvest

new churches. Christ says Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” (Matthew 9:37-38 NKJV)

The New Work Team as Sowers

Before the process of enlisting individual church planters as sowers (to be discussed in the following section), it was important to determine how the New Work team was to see themselves in the process of planting churches in northeast North Carolina. For the purposes of this thesis, as the New Work team began to understand their role, they began to consider themselves as sowers of the seed or at least that they would be involved in the process of helping to sow the seed in terms of the gospel as understood in terms of planting churches. As their role became expanded, they began to reflect upon the type of person that God would eventually use to help the New Work team accomplish this mission.

As a basis of having a place to begin this process, the New Work team began to discuss church planting agencies and networks, and how these agencies and networks employed strategies for church planting and enlisting church planters. Again, through prayer, they began to brainstorm these possibilities they decided that the best course of action was to utilize the best of what they knew. Reflecting upon what was available to them at the time, the team committed this process to prayer (an item to be discussed in the next section). The North Carolina Baptist State Convention’s church planting department seemed to be the most disposed to offer meaningful help to the Chowan

Baptist New Work team and utilized the support of Dr. Frank White, one of its consultants, to guide them through the process of formulating a comprehensive church planting strategy.

In their discussions with Dr. White, he proposed to the New Work team a process of cultivation of associational leadership and pastors through education and raising the level of awareness. Here he said, the seed would be sown, and workers for the New Work team would emerge from this process of elevating the awareness of the need. The more that this is done, he says, the more disposed the leadership and pastors will be to considering church planting as a viable and necessary part of the association's ministry. Time would demonstrate that Dr. White was correct. The New Work team then asked Dr. White to make an appointment to address a group of what amounted to about twenty-five pastors, ministry leaders, and interested persons for a luncheon meeting to discuss the possibilities and need for church planting in northeast North Carolina. Two ministry team personnel committed themselves to joining the team and two others joined a smaller group discussion following the meeting to discuss with the New Work team their particular calling to church planting ministry- individual whom were not known to the New Work team before this meeting began.

The Discovery of a Person of Peace.

The next step for the New Work team was to observe where church planters are currently working and seek to discover what they were doing and understand why they were successful. Consistent with the biblical concept of a *person of peace* was the most

encouraging aspect of this church planting focus since the author became team leader. It did not take long to discover that church planting efforts in northeast North Carolina were actually taking place before the New Work team ever existed or were even aware that they were there. As early as 2005, a church planter by the name of Winfield Bevins, a Southeastern Seminary graduate (2001) who experienced the call from God to launch out on his own and start a church in Nags Head, NC that he calls “Church of the Outer Banks.” This church has experienced unprecedented growth in the region. He received much of the blessing and initial start-up from the North Carolina Baptist State Convention’s church planting department. What was interesting about this arrangement is that virtually no communication existed with the Chowan Baptist Association or at least with its New Work team or leadership. This author on recently (September, 2009) met Bevins at a gathering of local pastors fellowship luncheon where he had been invited by another pastor. At that time, and in another private lunch setting, Bevins laid own his own vision and plan to initiate churches in virtually the same region as the New Work team. The author decided that it would be essential to incorporate Bevin’s vision and church planting strategy as a springboard to help instill a church planting consciousness among Chowan Baptist Association’s pastors, churches, and leadership.

How there could not be an awareness of Bevin’s work on the Outer Banks up to this point is shrouded in mystery. Perhaps there was some dissonance or assumption that the existing churches in the association would not be open or supportive to his work. This is a perception that some church planters find discouraging to associate itself with

already dead or declining church and have no patience with being connected with those conducting “business as usual.”²⁰⁴

The discovery of Bevin’s work was a blessing and a tremendous encouragement to the New Work team who had already been praying that God would show direction about how to “get a handle” on this task of church planting. Bevins directed this author to a group of church planters who were also planting churches in his particular context. This was a church planting network called *Plant NC*. As defined earlier, *Plant NC* a network or group of new works, churches for the purpose of building community for the purpose of assisting and encouraging each other and has its origins in North Carolina. The author made an appointment to speak to its leader, Will Plitt, who spent two sessions discussing with him the opportunities, as well as the particular challenges, of church planting across the state. Bevins originally received his commission, however, from the *Acts 29* network associated with Pastor Mark Driscoll and is based out of Seattle, Washington.²⁰⁵

Recruiting Church Planters as Sowers

The New Work also team discovered in the process of prayer and discuss that not just anyone could do the work of church planting. Endemic to the character of the church planter is the calling to do just that: a call to plant churches. No one moves and speaks

²⁰⁴ Malphurs, at: “3105-07,” Kindle edition.

²⁰⁵ Acts 29 Network <http://www.acts29network.org> (Accessed February 21, 2011).

with authority as much as the person who is absolutely sure God has called him to a task. If God clearly calls a person to plant churches, that person will have confidence and motivation. Without a definite call, a person may be casual, without direction, just passing time. A clear, undiluted call compels a person to a revolutionary status because he has all the authority of the universe behind him.²⁰⁶

In keeping with the parabolic analogy described earlier, the church planter is the sower of the seed. This sower must have a distinct calling for this work. It is not enough just to want to plant a church. The idea of planting churches seems to very popular among young pastors as they graduate from seminary. But the desire is insufficient no matter how gifted or talented the pastor may be. This section will explore the unique aspects of the necessity of a calling of God for this particular ministry, and how it is distinct from other types of callings for gospel ministry in other contexts, for example, as an established church. Searcy and Thomas define *calling* as “a strong inner impulse toward a particular course of action, especially when accompanied by conviction of divine influence.”²⁰⁷ These writers maintain that the reason why most church starts fail within the first year is because the majority of these church planters began these churches without a clear calling from God to do so.²⁰⁸ These writers also maintain that the call to plant churches is not the same thing as one’s call to ministry or even to be a pastor; but

²⁰⁶ Charles Brock, *Indigenous Church Planting* (Neosho, Missouri, Church Growth International, 1994), p. 25.

²⁰⁷ Nelson Searcy and Karrick Thomas, *Launch: Starting a Church from Scratch* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2006), at: “267-68,” Kindle edition.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, at: “268-71,” Kindle Edition.

that one's call as a church planter is unique to the particular ministry of planting churches.²⁰⁹ They say,

The call to start a new church plant is not the same as the call to serve in an existing church or work in a ministry-related organization. You may be the greatest preach this side of Billy Graham but still not be called to start a church. A clear calling to start a church is the most important ingredient in the planting of any new church. Successful church starts begin with a personal calling rather than a personal choice. You should take time to clarify your calling in order to enable confident leadership. When you know that God wants you to do something, then you can act boldly and decisively. While there will be moments and even periods of uncertainty, your calling will keep you moving forward—and it's often all you have in that first year.²¹⁰

J.D. Payne also admits that,

Church planting can be a lonely endeavor, especially when the team is working in a pioneer area where few strong relationships with other believers exist. Many times the team consists of one family sent by the Lord to an area where it is miles from home and Christian fellowship.²¹¹

On the subject of teams, a church planting team, if adequate resources are available, is usually more effective than a single church planter. Elmer Towns weighs in strongly for support of the multi church planting staff because,

Paul taught that ministers are servants, co-laborers and fellow workers with God. According to Paul, each laborer had a special ministry, but God was the one giving life (1 Cor. 3:6). When two or more “farmers” or pastors are working a garden, one planting and the other watering, they should be viewed as a team, although each will be rewarded individually. “Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own

²⁰⁹ Ibid. at: “271-273,” Kindle Edition.

²¹⁰ Ibid., at: “273-75,” Kindle edition..

²¹¹ J.D. Payne, at: “2842-45,” Kindle edition.

labor” (1 Cor. 3:8). All farmers are working together for one purpose—the harvest.²¹²

The calling may come in the form of a team or a single church planter. However it is composed, it is indeed important that church planters receive a certain, special call to this aspect of ministry. Stetzer comments that others view church planters with almost the same disdain with that the whole concept of church planting itself is also viewed: To some, “church planting is an alternative so that problem pastors can start their own churches without meddlesome lay leaders.”²¹³ They are even viewed by some as those who cannot do anything else or go anywhere else except into church planting because established churches will not have them as pastors. More specifically, Darrin Patrick, after wading through an extremely detailed chapter on calling to ministry, elaborates,

Your call to ministry does not have to be like my call, or anybody else’s call for that matter. In fact, one of the most interesting features of calling is that whether you look in the pages of the Bible or the annals of church history, God rarely calls two people in the exact same way. It is very important not to standardize the calling experience. Sometimes it is a dramatic Damascus Road experience. Other time it is more of an inward pull. But however your sense of calling has developed, it is imperative to recognize that you must have a clear sense of calling before you enter ministry...An aspiring pastor/church planter who is seeking to test his sense of calling should look for confirmation in at least three areas: heart confirmation, head confirmation, and skill confirmation²¹⁴

It is clear from reading these citations that exhibiting a clear calling from God for the particular ministry of planting churches is absolutely essential.

²¹² Towns, *Practical Encyclopedia of Church Growth*, p. 55.

²¹³ Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), at: “282-88,” Kindle edition.

²¹⁴ Patrick, at: 3187-89,” Kindle edition.

Secondly, Church Planters are different from most pastors in that they “are initiators, not maintainers. They’re characterized as proactive and intentional.”²¹⁵ Church planters are characterized as the successful farmer, who knows that outside of the fact that God gives the increase,

They must be initiators or watch their churches die. Church planters also have to be initiators when it comes to reaching people and building churches. They cannot sit in their studies and wait for people to come to them, because most people will not come. The days of maintenance ministry are over. Instead, leaders will have to develop strategies and lead their people in reaching the unchurched in their communities. Initiation takes far more mental, emotional, and physical effort than maintenance.²¹⁶

Thirdly, as initiators, church planters must be people who possess great faith in their God and in the work that God has called them to do. This is already underscored in the biblical basis of this thesis. However, one writer describes church planters as “those who enlist in launching new churches must be men and women of strong, stretching faith in God. This involves both believing and obeying God.”²¹⁷

Fourthly, effective church planters should be assessed. There are a number of various assessment tools and batteries available to test and assess the potential church planter. One of the most common, as mentioned by Arment and others, is the Myers Briggs Type Indicator, a personality assessment tool.²¹⁸ Another popular indicator is the Ridley assessment tool developed by Charles Ridley in use by many denominations that

²¹⁵ Malphurs, at: “131-35,” Kindle edition.

²¹⁶ Ibid., at: “138-39,” Kindle edition.

²¹⁷ Malphurs, at: “162-65,” Kindle edition.

²¹⁸ Arment, at: “1461-65,” Kindle edition.

“developed a helpful process for determining the probability that a person will succeed in church planting.”²¹⁹ Stetzer himself provides an excellent assessment tool using the acrostic SHAPE:

- Spiritual gifts: gifts of ministry bestowed by the Holy Spirit.
- Heart or passion: A burden to establish an outreach toward a specific people group in a particular location, or through a specific type of ministry.
- Abilities: Entrepreneurial talents useful in planting (or perhaps in generating income in a bi-vocational church plant).
- Personality type: Analysis of personality types often appearing in church planters.
- Experiences: Tools for describing experiences to help the planter understand when, where, and how to plant a church.²²⁰

From the personality assessments various characteristics are established and profiles are generated as to who is most likely to succeed as a church planting missionary.

Enlisting the Prospective Sower

Ben Arment recommends that, “The church planter, as the sower of the seed must possess the right aptitude, attitude, and temperament for sewing the seed in his context. Let us not forget that the church planter himself must have an excellent grasp and knowledge of the soil into which he is to plant the seed he is commissioned to plant.”²²¹

²¹⁹ Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, at: “1779-81,” Kindle edition.

²²⁰ Ibid.. at: “1767-74,” Kindle edition.

²²¹ Arment, at: “1985-1990,” Kindle edition.

The cultural context of this soil is, after all, northeastern North Carolina. It is the author's contention that it would be helpful, although perhaps not essential for the church planter to be from the state or have been reared or at least spent considerable time there. Being from this particular region would be even more helpful, since the culture even of North Carolinians varies from one end of the state to the other. Again, Arment weighs in here,

A transplant church planter or church plant will probably not succeed because he does not understand the culture of his soil or have the deep relationships that successful church plants require. "The most successful church plants were not imported; they were homegrown."²²²

Whoever is selected, it is essential that church planters and "missionaries must learn the heart language of the people in order to be knowledgeable about their worldviews and to effectively communicate the gospel."²²³ Payne continues,

Unless a team is working among a remote people on whom little cultural and sociological research has been done, there is no excuse for church planters to be ignorant of their people's geography, demographics, culture, spirituality, history, politics, and language before they arrive on the field.²²⁴

The New Work team of the Chowan Baptist Association, charged with setting the strategy, is also empowered to procure and engage in the interviewing process and making recommendations to the leadership team of the association before final approval by the CBA executive board. It would be natural to consider sources in the state where church planters and pastors are trained and equipped for this special work in context.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Payne, at: "2547-51," Kindle Edition.

²²⁴ Ibid., at: "2562-62," Kindle Edition.

Thankfully, North Carolina Southern Baptists are already endowed with an excellent seminary: Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, located in Wake Forest, North Carolina. Initial contact was made by this author as well as the Associational Missionary with the seminary in 2005 was written to come up with a strategy at that with the seminary to enlist workers involved a project then known as the Nehemiah Project. The Nehemiah Project was developed by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board (NAMB) for the purpose of enlisting and training the next generation of church planters:

The Nehemiah Project is a cooperative strategy that links Southern Baptist churches, associations, state conventions, the Canadian Southern Baptist Convention, Southern Baptist Seminaries funded through the Cooperative Program, and the North American Mission Board to intentionally prepare missionaries to plant healthy, reproducing churches. The Nehemiah Professors at each of the seven seminaries direct the Nehemiah Centers at their respective campuses to carry out this work. These Centers also provide opportunities of equipping existing churches, associational, and state convention field partners for planting multiplying churches. The Nehemiah Project identifies, equips, and places missionaries who plant reproducing Southern Baptist churches to reach people groups in North America.²²⁵

The New Work team also considered utilizing the Nehemiah Project as one source for prospective church planters mainly because many prospective candidates are “born and bred” in the state and have an understanding of the workings of church planting in context. However, one item of consideration was stated well by Wayne McDill as quoted by Chaney: “Evangelism will be effective toward making disciples in direct proportion to its dependence on the establishment and cultivation of meaningful relationships.”²²⁶

²²⁵ North American Mission Board, *The Nehemiah Project Resource Manual*, <http://www.sbts.edu/documents/cpc/NehemiahProjectManual.pdf2003>, p. 3. (accessed January 10, 2011).

²²⁶ Chaney, p. 168.

The New Work team is sure that the seminary, as well as the Nehemiah Project, has produced many excellent church planters. However, few if any have demonstrated much interest in coming to the Albemarle region because of its supposed geographically exclusive and remote context.

The New Work team also discussed and examined the church planting network incorporated in Liberty Baptist Fellowship, a church planting and chaplaincy endorsement agency affiliated with Liberty University. The author's church where he currently serves as pastor also supports this agency financially. Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary also has a number of students from the state of North Carolina and those interested in the work of church planting.

Financing and Sponsorship of New Works

The New Work ministry team recognizes very quickly that it has a meager budget- really much too small to provide any meaningful help to any church planter accomplish much in the way of ministry much less provide a salary. In the previous year leading up to this study, the Associational Leadership team, of which the New Work team is a part, was compelled to slice \$40,000.00 from its proposed annual budget (approved in October 2010). Not only did this mean that there would be no money to help start new churches, but the budget for the New Work team was cut \$1,000.00 back to \$4,000.00 for the entire year.

Because of this financial need, the New Work team will need to pray and to enlist as many existing churches (preferably larger ones) to sponsor the planting of churches.

Churches should be preferable to planting other churches anyway. Elmer Towns also explains this need

The large church has the people and other resources necessary to begin new congregations and to help ensure a healthy birth. Some contemporary models of urban church planting advise beginning a new church with a congregation large enough to support a pastoral team (i.e., a church of at least a hundred people and at least two pastors). A small church of 150 people cannot afford to commission two-thirds of its congregation to begin a new church without seriously hindering its own ministry. But a church of two thousand could start several churches and quickly replace these seed members with new growth.²²⁷

Additionally, when the New Work team began to enlist the support of *Plant NC* for its guidance and support, understandably they decided not to take an active role when they discovered that the finances were not in place. The leadership of Plant NC would require at least \$5000.00 per year to provide monthly training, seminars, travel expenses and other items just to place someone in the field as a part-time consultant as a catalyst to work with churches and associational leaders such as the New Work team. The Associational Leadership team counseled the New Work team that this would not be possible given the current circumstances. So it appeared that, from a financial point of view, the prospects for starting churches in northeastern North Carolina did not appear very positive even from the standpoint of operating from a shoe-string budget.

However, the New Work team decided not to be discouraged by this or to consider the meager finances as a reason not to engage in their work. They also determined that if God desired new churches to be planted, God would use their pittance

²²⁷ Towns, *Practical Encyclopedia of Church Growth*, p. 58.

amount and multiply abundantly if that is what God desired to do. One resource stated it well when the writer said:

God has given every church resources that are worthy for the journey of partnering in church planting. Unfortunately, many churches limit their potential effectiveness because they focus on what they do not have, instead of focusing on what they do have.²²⁸

Again this underscores the need for prayer as an integral part of this strategy. It was pointed out to the New Work team by one of its members that already a church planter was on the field and successful accomplishing the work of church planting long before the Chowan Baptist Association or the New Work team was aware of it. If God had already provided for that situation, then God would certainly provide what was needed for the future once the New Work team committed to the effort of church planting by faith. When sufficient awareness of the need for church planting arises, God will supply the need sufficiently for the task.

Mileposts for the Sowers: a Systematic Process to Develop an Associational Strategy

At the same time, the New Work team was also introduced to a document entitled *Partners in Church Planting: a Guide to Church Planting for the Sponsoring Church*.²²⁹

This resource, produced by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, encouraged the New Work team by giving it a “handle” upon which it could grasp the voluminous pieces of information to help them map out a strategy and then guide them

²²⁸ North American Mission Board, *The Church Planting Journey: An Introduction for Sponsors and Partners*, <http://www.churchplantingvillage.net/churchplantingvillagepb.aspx?pageid=8589990553> (Accessed January 12, 2011) p. 11.

²²⁹ Ibid.

through the process of church planting. Part of strategy knows where to find good information, and the New Work team committed to studying probably about twenty processes before engaging in developing their strategy.²³⁰

Empirical Research

The New Work team also discussed that the more closely the church planter identifies with the cultural context, the more successful he will be. This is where the research element of the strategy process enters in. Research is tedious, but almost as important as prayer. Stetzer and Putnam claim, “If we are going to develop relevant churches, it is important to identify through our research specific barriers and issues that answer this question of ‘why’ a certain people group, population, or those within a certain cultural environment as a whole are unchurched?”²³¹

Consequently, the New Work team set about how to discover prospects and what type of person would be amenable to a church plant in this region. The New Work team adapted an empirical method of identifying these prospects with multiplying church planting data discovery that will be more fully developed and analyzed in the research section. Stetzer and Putnam also tell us that “the more you discover and learn about the people groups and community, the more effective you will become in relating to and communicating with all the people in your area.”²³² By observing the data resources, the

²³⁰ See Appendix: “Timeline.”

²³¹ Stetzer and Putnam, at: “1439-54,” Kindle Edition.

²³² Ibid., at: “3742-48,” Kindle Edition.

New Work team will analyze the numbers in order to discover and identify new people groups and communities in need of new churches. Information is provided in the appendices that demonstrate the need for new churches and the decline of church attendance and underscoring the need for intense evangelism efforts in church planting.²³³ Church planters will often use this valuable information to answer important questions about the people who live in their target area: their age, racial identity, income levels, educational attainment, home ownership percentages, mobility, housing density, type of housing, and how many people live there. The data gathered can be as sophisticated as desired depending upon the demographic the church planter is looking for. The team decided that gathering and studying this data is often tedious and labor-intensive-even with the availability of the internet and periodic posting of on-line resources, nothing takes the place of personal contact with the desired community of outreach.

CONCLUSION

Charles Brock summed up the purposes of the New Work team precisely when he wrote:

The greater the reliance upon the three basic elements of New Testament church planting, a committed sower, the Word, and the Spirit, the more likely the birth of a genuine church. The Holy Spirit and the Scripture are the strings that draw and unite a group, if that group is really a church. The more the drawing and binding is attributed to anyone or anything other than the Word and the Holy Spirit, the more the group is suspect, even though it be called "church."²³⁴

²³³ See Appendix: NC Church2.

²³⁴ Brock, p. 30.

The author learned that the process of developing a strategy, much less the planting of a church, is a long and painstaking process. The motivation of the New Work team coordinator must be committed, if not realistic in his expectations, especially in areas where the gospel impact is barely noticeable or that the attitude of existing churches are closed or recalcitrant. It is a prayerful process that the New Work team had to undergo even before the team was selected and set to work. The New Work team coordinator had to rely upon the working of the Holy Spirit to direct him to select these members and then to work through them, almost taking a back-seat in deference to their experiences and wisdom on this subject that was greater than his.

There were times when it was difficult for the team to come together physically to meet together, as well as to meet with Dr. White and others beneficial to consulting with the team. The author learned to work with these men who not only had a greater range of experiences and wisdom but also represented a wide range of personalities.

The author, and ultimately the New Work team, learned key insights into the culture that is unique to northeast North Carolina through the research as well as through the personal contact with people, and that there was more than one culture in the region. The OBX beach culture is now diversified from the rest of the region and indeed the rest of the state.

The author learned that he, as well as the New Work team must be patient with pastors and other church and denominational leaders and serve as a catalyst to teach them about the needs and the process of church planting, to reproduce their churches by implanting the church planting DNA into their ministry methodology, and to be generally

supportive of the church planting endeavors through their prayers, finances, and encouragement. The New Work team must also be patient with the culture and to be careful not to view themselves with an air of superiority or the culture with disdain or to think of them as not worthy of their church planting efforts because of their relative poverty, lack of education, or other perceived limitations.

The New Work team learned to value one another as a team of brothers in Christ who bonded together as a closely-knit and loyal unit. This only served to fuel their passion for planting churches and to broaden their vision of what it could be. Finally, the author, as well as the New Work team learned to give thanks and glory to God for all that was accomplished in the entire planting process of local churches. “Who then is Paul, and who [is] Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” (I Corinthians 3:5-6KJV).

CHAPTER FIVE

Examination of the Soil: Research and Analysis

This next chapter will deal with research and analysis in developing a profile for those who might characterize someone typical of one who may be reached by a new church plant in northeast North Carolina. Who is this person? What is his background? What are his values and how do they reflect upon what does he does for entertainment? What are his tastes in television viewing and are these things relevant to what he believes about life and how he sees himself in this world and his world around him? Is this person indigenous to the culture of northeast North Carolina and if so what are some ways in which this might be reflected?

In keeping with the parabolic analogy of the soils, the New Work team needed empirical information concerning the current cultural context of people they believed would be *fertile soil* for their efforts of planting churches. This research first will examine a population demographic based upon statistics developed and provided by the most census data available. This information, considered *raw data* will be compared against a market survey conducted by the New Work team to make personal contact in which to draw a composite sketch to identify the type of person they would be most likely to reach and then to assess felt needs and values. For control purposes, the survey would then be tested against a computer/internet-driven research survey of persons living in the area. The findings and analysis of this study will be also be revealed here and in the appendix, *Research Tables*

METHODOLOGY

The New Work team conducted a series of surveys to gather their data to generate a profile of people they hoped would be most responsive to the outreach of a new church plant in northeast North Carolina. In consideration of the cultural aspects already discussed, the team generated a series of questions and probed several communities in the region with the same questions. The surveys were conducted *in person* as well as electronically over the internet in order to create a control group and compare results. The purpose of providing this survey was to determine what cultural aspects were unique to the region and what cultural aspects were held in common by persons of similar background throughout the country. Utilizing the Survey Monkey online survey and marketing software²³⁵, the survey was broadcast over the internet-emailed to a wide audience to over a thousand email addresses with the hopes of receiving at least 100 respondents to complete the survey. To the researcher's amazement, the responses generated more than the one hundred, but for the sake of calculation and accuracy, the researcher cut off the surveyed responses after the initial one hundred came in.

The goal of the individual survey (non-electronic) was to amass 100 respondents for each survey from each of the following communities and sub-regions of the region: Columbia, Moyock, Edenton, Elizabeth City, Gates County, and Outer Banks.

²³⁵ Survey Monkey Online Software. <http://www.surveymonkey.com> (Accessed October 9, 2010).

A fixed location was determined in each of the polled communities. The surveyor(s) were instructed to collect their data in front of grocery stores (if possible), since this was the most common venue found in all six communities. Permission from the managers of these establishments was secured first. Wal-Mart department stores, however, were avoided (only two of these communities possessed a Wal-Mart) and also because visitors from neighboring communities (including the inhabitants of communities already surveyed) frequented there.

The researcher composed two separate market surveys that consists of ten questions each. The researcher decided to conduct these polls at two different times so as not to belabor and overwhelm the ones surveyed with more than ten questions. The researcher/surveyor returned to the same locations with the second survey. Obviously the researcher would not encounter the same group of people, but in actuality he was able to contact two-hundred people at each location in each of the six surveyed communities in northeast North Carolina.

First, a description of each of the communities themselves:

Columbia, NC— located in Tyrrell County, population 764, has experienced a 5 percent decline in population since 2000 and 15 percent in population since 1990.²³⁶

²³⁶ CLR Search Statistics, http://www.clrsearch.com/Columbia_Demographics/NC/Population_Growth_Statistics (Accessed December 28, 2010).

Moyock, NC—located in Currituck County, population 24,583, has experienced a 35 percent increase in population since 2000 and 79 percent increase since 1990.²³⁷ It is also located in the extreme northeastern section of the polled region.

Edenton, NC—located in Chowan County, population 4,913, has experienced a 5 percent decline in population since 2000 and a 8 percent decline since 1990.²³⁸ This community is located in the extreme southwestern section of the Albemarle region.

Elizabeth City —located in Pasquotank County, population 18,762, has experience a 16 percent increase in population since 2000 and a 15 percent increase since 1990.²³⁹ Elizabeth City is the largest city in the Albemarle region.

Gates County, NC—is located in the northwestern-most section of the Albemarle region with an overall population of 12,258. As a county, it has increased 17 percent in population since 2000 and 32 percent since 1990.

Outer Banks- this sub-region of the Albemarle region included the population statistics of three of its major communities: Kitty Hawk, Kill Devil Hills, and Manteo which has a

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ CLR Search Statistics,
http://www.clrsearch.com/Moyock_Demographics/NC/?compare=Elizabeth+City+percent2C+NC
(Accessed December 28, 2010).

combined population of 10,878. Outer Banks, a popular tourist area, has an average increase of 47 percent since 1990 and 9 percent since 2000.²⁴⁰

SURVEY ONE

The Survey Questions and Analysis

The following questions and rationale for asking them were determined by the New Work team in order to probe the diversity of the population as well as to create, if possible, a profile of a person typical of northeastern North Carolina. The questions were asked of each of surveyed communities and then compiled together.

1. Please Indicate Gender:

Gender was an important question to ask for the following reasons: It would appear that the females of all communities surveyed were either the ones most available for the survey or they were the most enthusiastic about responding to the questions. This may also say something about the way that men and women respond to churches and openness to discussing spiritual or personal matters.

Twice as many women answered both surveys than men. The researcher does not know why this was not more evenly distributed, however there seemed to be little

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

difference (+ 1 percent) when comparing the personal survey to the internet/email based surveys. One possible reason may be that more women were available at the times in which the surveys were taken.

2. Ethnic/Racial heritage (please indicate all that apply):

Surveys of this nature, especially among racial groupings, can be very sensitive and may not be accurate. The New Work team found them somewhat tedious to probe. The dynamics were difficult because of the perceptions some might make as to the reason(s) questions were being asked and may not always be accurate. When, for example, if a person on the street or some other public venue was encountered by a poll-taker, and the poll-taker was obviously of a different race than the one asked to do the survey, many times the survey was declined for no specific reason. This begs to ask the question, “What does this encounter have to say about racial attitudes in northeastern North Carolina?” Another question related to this, but not explored in this survey: “Would people of differing racial groups feel comfortable worshipping together in a multi-cultural setting?” It is the observation of this author, having observed from the data and as nearly life-long resident of the probed region that attitudes toward ethnic diversity in such a setting is somewhat difficult to gauge. If ethnic diversity is a value appreciated—and most in northeastern North Carolina believe that it is, why is it that so many congregations among whites and blacks are still so drastically segregated? Does this necessarily have to do with race, or are there other questions to consider—such as the familial structure observed among the churches? It is the researcher’s observation that, at least in this region, churches may be divided along ethnic lines but it is because of the

family structures and identification which drives them, not necessarily race. Few may feel unwelcome to attend a worship service where most of the participants were of another ethnicity. A point worth pondering is that being a member of a family unit which happens to worship in that congregation is what drives one's acceptance into the group; not necessarily racial identity.

There is also a very pronounced discrepancy in the internet/email generated survey, where virtually few if any persons other than those of Caucasian ethnicity responded to the survey. For example, from what could be determined in the survey, there were African Americans polled electronically in the survey, but none responded in the 100 persons who were polled.

The compiler of this data is concerned about the uneven distribution because he knows that in many of the communities surveyed, blacks outnumber whites by a certain margin. If this is the case, why would not more blacks represent themselves on the survey? Is it because of the place where the survey was conducted? This was considered, however in the more remote communities such as Columbia and Gates County, there was only one grocery store available to both racial groups, yet the results were the same.

The next question had to do with probing the educational background of respondents of each of the communities and sub-regions of the Albemarle against the national survey.

3. Educational background (please select all that apply)

Based upon the obvious discrepancies between the individual communities and the Internet/Email-Driven surveys, it was determined that this survey was not very accurate because of the manner in which respondents were asked the questions for the following reasons:

1) The personal survey takers were accurate in asking to give one response only to the questions whereas the internet-driven survey asked respondent to indicate all that would apply. It should have been scrapped and asked again, however there was not enough time to gather the data again from a different poll group (the same respondents would likely not have answered this question again).

2) The above statement notwithstanding, the poll-group from the Internet/Email Driven survey obviously possessed a higher than average educational level probably for being in the position for responding to such a survey. For example, operating a computer, and negotiating around the internet and knowing how to respond to such questions presumes certain skills—most of which are learned in formal school settings and probably presumes a certain financial or income level as well. For example, many people of a lower income level do not have access to computers or the internet on a regular basis. Many people of certain generational categories, for example, do not have the interest or the skill level to operate and/or use the internet on a consistent basis.

However, this question in the survey is not completely without value. It would still be helpful to a church planter, for example, to know the basic education level in his

community. Why would this be important? Educational level may correlate with the next item surveyed.

4. Generational Grouping Please select from the following the years under which you were born:

The results of this survey were as follows with the percentage of those polled listed in the following generational groupings and years of corresponding birth and range:

These generational groupings in each of their respective communities, according to the surveys, seem to be in keeping with the census data compiled in 2000. The internet/email driven survey displayed a much wider diversity. The assumption is that it would be expected that those in the younger age categories would have greater access and familiarity with the internet. Outer Banks had a more even distribution of generational categories. This could be interpreted that a large number of Builders went to the Outer Banks to retire. But the prevalent number of Busters in that community are relocating there to operate businesses and to seek employment in the tourism industry which thrive there. Children of the Boomer generation, the Millenials, are returning to the Outer Banks after college or remaining there for employment and because of the wide range of recreational activities that abounds there.

Elizabeth City and Gates demonstrated a remarkably similar breakdown in population scores; with only a one or two percent difference between age categories. This is remarkable because Gates County is an almost completely rural community with vast tracts of farmland; whereas Elizabeth City is the most populous community in the

survey. Edenton and Columbia are also very similar in terms of the type of community (small country town) as well as in the survey results.

What was somewhat disappointing was that the survey data did not demonstrate which communities was poised to be the most receptive or which community could be targeted to begin a new church based on the data found here with exception of the Outer Banks. Elizabeth City and Moyock seem to have growing communities of Busters and Millennials, which would make good target groups.

Religious/Spiritual Background Questions

5. The next question that was surveyed was religious preference. Please indicate, if any, your religious background (Please Check all that apply):

The data for this survey was also compared against the county religious profile statistics found in The Association of Religion Data Archives.²⁴¹ While there were some variations among the more rural locations such as Columbia, Gates, and Edenton, most of the statistics demonstrated some consistency: especially among the Christian Protestant groupings. However, in the larger communities such as Elizabeth City, Moyock, and Outer Banks, Christian Protestant indicators did not show as highly. In Outer Banks, Christian Protestant and Catholic measured evenly (24 percent each) with more indicators of non-Christian faiths such as Jewish, Islam, and Hinduism measuring more highly. Outer Banks demonstrated the most diverse religious community perhaps for the reason that many newcomers have settled on the beaches for retirement or even for business

²⁴¹ The Association of Religion Data Archives, <http://www.thearda.com/rmh/> (Accessed January 12, 2011).

and/or investment purposes. For example, one individual who claimed the Hindu faith also volunteered that she and her husband were hotel owners. Many hotel owners on the Outer Banks also claim this distinction. A middle-aged couple who responded with the Christian Orthodox faith were Greek immigrants to America many years ago, and were restaurant owners. International immigration seems to account for much of the new influx. However, these numbers were compiled outside of the high tourist season to give a more accurate indication of indigenous- or at least a more permanent-population.

6. If you attend church, please select the type music that you prefer:

There is a wide range of music preferences among both the control group as well as the community-based groups. While some of the respondents may not have been clear about the music which they were to identify, there seemed to be enough disparity in the selections to provide choices. Organ music, for example, is identified with worshippers who prefer Roman Catholic or Anglican, “high church” type music. It is interesting to note that the percentages in this group were within 5 percent- and did not number over 10 percent of those surveyed in all six communities and showed little disparity between less and greater populated areas. The indicator that was the lowest was, not surprisingly, the Outer Banks. However, the Outer Banks possesses the largest churches of this category in all of northeastern North Carolina.

Traditional hymns rated the most highly throughout the six communities, averaging 37.5 percent over all. Contemporary and praise is the next highest with 31.5 percent average throughout all the communities surveyed. Not surprisingly, preference

for this type music was lowest in the rural populations, with the highest registered was at 46 percent in the Outer Banks. The highest recorded preference for Gospel music was found in Elizabeth City, where African American churches (and population) exceed those of whites.

A church planter would be wise to pay attention to these statistics if he wants contextualize the worship in the community in which he plants. Style of music is important. Even though the New Work team would want to plant non-traditional or contextualized churches, this does not mean that they all have to have a contemporary style of music as long as it is done with excellence.

7. Television Programming Preferences

The next question surveyed the interests of television programs or cable/satellite channels which appealed to viewers in each of the six communities. Why would such a survey be taken? Because these viewing habits indicate much more than entertainment or even interests; these habits also point to values which motivate those surveyed to view particular programs or channels. A recent Barna report also states that some Americans list television programming as one of their moderate concerns.²⁴² The purpose in probing these values would be to help build a profile of the viewer and then determine if the composite was someone typical or atypical of the region studied. Can viewing habits of television channels tell us anything about the spiritual inclinations of the respondents

²⁴²Jennifer Riley, *Study Identifies Most Pressing Issues to Americans*, The Christian Post, <http://www.christianpost.com/news/study-identifies-most-pressing-issues-to-americans-30930/> (Accessed February 10, 2011).

surveyed? What would be typical of the regions preferences as opposed to the control group?

Survey Two was conducted with more specialized channels in mind.

Survey Three also involved specialized television viewing over a wide range of topics.

As best as can be determined, simply from a superficial observation of the data based upon the television viewing preferences and habits of viewers in all six counties, Outer Banks demonstrates the most sophisticated community of the six, with Moyock and Elizabeth City in the same relative groupings. Columbia, Edenton, and Gates County were typically less sophisticated in terms of the percentages of viewers in each community category. For example, it was not surprising that the more rural communities such as Columbia, Edenton, and Gates County selected a proportionately greater number of respondents who selected the Wildlife/Sportsmans network. However, the more sophisticated Outer Banks community also scored as highly in this program area probably due to the large number of sports and deep-sea fisherman who live in the area. Moyock, in Currituck County, is home to one of the most popular duck hunting regions in the nation.

It is not always easy to pinpoint levels of sophistication among television viewers, but this data helped to define the people from a cultural awareness point of view. These types of indicators of favorite television programs would be helpful to a church planter as a means of connecting, learning his people, and asking questions in conversation that will lead to building a relationship. People feel often threatened by spiritual conversations.

It's the wise person who knows how to get into the heart of a person, become interested

in what he or she is interested in or cares about, and establishes a connection. From that connection, the church planter can build on this or use it to springboard into other things and have more meaningful conversations about Christ as the relationship builds. The church planter can use this information and pray about opportunities to use it as the Holy Spirit directs him.

The fourth item of this survey asked about what television news source they watched.

8. What news channels do you regularly watch (please choose one):

There was a wide disparity of TV news viewing, but the one most disconcerting was the difference between the internet control group and the community-based surveys—especially as it concerned the frequency of FOX news viewers. Apparently, most of those surveyed in the internet survey group are overwhelmingly conservative viewers, so there is not much value of comparison between the two groups. However, the researcher determined that those living in the more rural communities registered more FOX news network viewers than in the more populated areas; with the exception of Elizabeth City, which indicated a strong 26 percent for FOX news network which bills itself as the newscast with appeal to conservative viewpoints and values on issues of politics and social issues.

The Outer Banks registered the most liberal news viewing habits, based on this survey. A church planter would keep this in mind when determining the socio-economic and political structure of the community.

9. What type of sports programs do you watch on television (indicate all that apply)

It should be clear to the church planter that basketball and Nascar/Stock Car are the sports that will be the most frequent in conversation, and when in season, football. Is this an important subject? A wise church planter will know how to relate to the people he is trying to reach by knowing how to address subjects that are important to them. Sports is a subject that many people can find common ground of discussion. If the church planter does not know that much about a sport or about the teams that play it, he would be wise to educate himself on them. Discussions of sports can lead to other things- such as building relationships which might lead to a discussion of spiritual matters. Any popular subject like the ones listed above can be used in conversation to provide valuable lead-ins to Christ. It demonstrates to the respondent that the church planter values and cares about him.

Many respondents did not know what to say or how to respond to this question and either marked “other” or did not answer the question at all. This also goes to point out that not everybody is interested in sports. Of the ones who did not answer the question—all of them were females, and the overwhelming majority of those who selected “other” were also females. Based on this information, it is likely that if all of the

time is spent talking about sports and there are females present, it is likely the females will lose interest in the conversation.

10. What type of music best describes you or that you listen to the most? (Choose one)

Music is a very strong subject of conversation and a pervasive influence on many people. Some of the most powerful ideas known to man have been conveyed through music. Music makes a powerful point of contact as well as reflects and underscores the values of people. For this survey, country-western music was the most popular, followed by rock and pop. Oldies music was also a strong indicator of older, elderly people in the population. A relatively large number also put other, which determined that there are many who have no opinion when it comes to music or have little appreciation for it. A wise church planter will know how to relate music to conversation and demonstrate both an appreciation as well as sensitivity for it.

SURVEY 2: CULTURAL AWARENESS

The purpose for the following survey is to determine the typical type of dwelling occupied by someone who lived in the Albemarle region. Only one answer was allowed. The questions were not meant to generate stereotypes of individuals, but to communicate where the respondent would be comfortable living, and ultimately where the respondent would be comfortable worshipping. Sometimes the types of homes boil down to the economic level of the respondent, but not always. This question would be valuable to the church planter in determining the culture of the respondent as well as to determine the

type of worship center the respondent would be comfortable worshipping in. The control group internet-based survey will indicate first and then the community survey.

Type of Dwelling. Respondents were asked to indicate the type of home in which they lived.

Internet-based survey:

1. Please indicate the type of home you live in:

The most popular, or most recurrent home indicated in the respondents' survey was the site-built or "stick-built" type home- all within the 50 percent range of at least plus or minus 5 percent in variation. However, where there was the widest diversity was found in the other three types with the double-wide home was found most recurrent in the more rural populations of the region; averaging 29.3 percent. The more populous communities averaged 18.6 percent of those who indicated they lived in a double-wide home. The single-wide trailer homes averaged 17 percent in the rural communities and 4.3 percent in the more populous areas. Apartment dwellers averaged 6.6 percent in the rural communities and 23 percent in the more populous areas of the region. A "none-of-the above" selection was also given here, with 3 percent of the rural residents giving this response as opposed to 0 percent in the more populous areas. The respondents did not suggest an alternative. For some reason, those taking the survey on the internet indicated a much stronger response to this question.

The researcher believes this information would be important in terms of the selection of the type building the church planter could use for a temporary or permanent meeting site or worship center. For example, if the church plant's first worship center proposed a steel or pole building type design (usually a prefabricated structure), those living in a "stick-built" type home may not want to worship there. Regardless of motivation, to some people, these types of homes may be regarded culturally as symbols of class or status.

2. I enjoy eating the following foods:

The question and the selections given are not trivial. Food is a statement of culture and the food choices in the tables above indicate the popularity of these foods in northeastern North Carolina. In consideration of this analysis, a church planter or church planting team would be wise to consider these items if they desire to establish a contextualized church. Learning to adapt to local customs, eating their food and developing an appetite for them is generally considered a point of contact with indigenous people. The biblical principle is found in at least one occasion where said "And if that same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. And into whatever city yet enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you." (Luke 10:7-8NKJV)

The following survey has to do with food selection with an even greater cultural distinctiveness:

3. When I eat Pork BBQ, I enjoy it with

It is clearly obvious that the popularity of the vinegar-based barbeque sauce, (over pulled-pork, of course) is considered a cultural icon in northeast North Carolina as well as in southeastern Virginia. The favor for this BBQ sauce rates extremely high in the rural communities of the survey but is prevalently strong in the more populous communities as well. Perhaps the reason why it does not rate as highly, for example, in the Outer Banks, is because people from other regions of the country—particularly the northeast—have settled in these areas to retire or to find jobs and do not have a taste for it. This would be important to the church planter or church planting team who can discern with great accuracy that a person is of the region for their preference of this sauce on their barbeque—or even if they like the barbecue at all. It is interesting that in the control group (internet-based survey) a higher percentage listed a preference for the vinegar-based sauce even though many—if not most—of the respondents were from outside the region.

4. When going fishing, I enjoy catching (please respond the type fish you typically catch)

Fishing is a very popular sport and past-time in northeastern North Carolina. The taste for fish, and even certain species of fish, can also be strong cultural indicators. Many citizens of the region own some type of a boat (for fishing or for pleasure) even if they do not use it regularly. A boat is as much of a fixture in the driveway or yard as any other type vehicle purely because of the easy access to the ocean and inland waterways. The respondents were allowed to give as many selections as desired. It is clear from

these tables that striped bass and catfish were the two most popular fish to catch, followed by perch in the rural communities. Of those who fish for recreation in the more populous communities, these same fish weighed-in highly as well, although not quite as highly as in the rural communities. But the research should demonstrate a high degree of popularity of this sport in the region. Implications for church planters: A church planter can form relationships to people simply by taking someone fishing or being invited to go with a church member or a potential prospect. Fishing is a sport that forms strong bonds between participants and can break down barriers: particularly among men. “Fish fries” are also very popular social gatherings in the region of which the astute church planter should take note, and should find his way to them in order to identify with the cultural context—even if he does not have a taste for fish. It shows that he is endeavoring to relate to the community in which he serves and ministers.

5. I own a pick-up truck (Please Answer either yes or no).

The results with this survey were not entirely unpredictable, given the popularity of pickup trucks and the utility, if not the necessity of having one when living in rural areas. The control group internet survey was almost even number of those owning a pick up truck as to those who did not- or slightly higher. The distribution of respondents resembled the more populous communities of northeastern North Carolina. Gates County, NC registered significantly higher than all of the communities combined. Gates County is located in and around the Great Dismal Swamp where many four-wheel-drive vehicles are often viewed as a necessity.

What implications does this have for the church planter? Owning a pickup truck will demonstrate identity or a desire to identify. It may even be necessary to own a four-wheel-drive pickup or vehicle to reach out to prospects in remote areas, or to drive on the beach (many beach dwellers on the Outer Banks own one just for this purpose). It may not be necessary, but it would be helpful to own even an old pick up just for the sake of hauling refuse to the county dump- which is how most citizens of the region dispose of their trash—Just another point of contact to identify with the community.

6. The next survey was designed to elicit a response concerning the family unit which those surveyed lived. Since such a question is often a sensitive one, it was designed to be asked in such a way that it would not appear so serious. The research was hoping that he could draw out a greater response in this manner by interacting in an informal manner, which is what the questions were designed to do.

I live with my: (Please indicate one response for the following)

The purpose of this question was to determine conservative and/or family values among the people of the region surveyed. The differences demonstrated among those who indicated living with their spouse were not extremely significant across the region. In fact—the most rural community- Gates County, and the most populous-The Outer Banks, demonstrated the closest percentage with just three percentage points between them. Family values of marriage were held the most highly in Elizabeth City, which indicated 74 percent as opposed to Gates County indicating 65 percent. Living with

one's "significant other" varied the most sharply in the Outer Banks, where 23 percent of respondents reported the highest percentage of this group.

7. Geographic awareness survey. The purpose in generating this question is to generate awareness of the geographic environment in which one lives.

Please describe the terrain in which you live (Please select one):

The purpose of this question was to encourage the respondent to interact with the surveyor, and describe the terrain in which the respondent identifies or lives. Would this question be of interest to a church planter? If a resident has a certain understanding about the geography of where he or she lives, they may take this into consideration when thinking about where they might attend a church. Some might not wish to drive to city to attend church. Others would think twice about driving to a remote location. Having an awareness of the geography can also create a bond- for example, among those who grew up in a small or country town are familiar with one another and have known one another their entire lives. Those who live on farmland perhaps even more so. The mountains and the swamp are specialized questions (there are no mountains in northeastern North Carolina, but this would be relevant for the control group). The Great Dismal Swamp area has a culture very similar to that of mountain people. The city or urbanites and those living in the suburbs one might suppose a greater awareness of the world around them or possess more sophisticated values.

8. Gun possession. Respondents were asked to provide information concerning a type of weapon they might possess for the purposes of protection or recreation.

Please indicate if you own the following types of weapons for recreation or for protection. (More than one response may be given).

The purpose of this survey question is for cultural identification with the region. Like fishing, hunting is a very popular sport enjoyed by the residents of this region. However, there are certain stereotypes about some gun owners—especially of those who live in the country and the researcher wanted to avoid these stereotypes. The researcher wanted to generate an awareness of how the respondents of each of the communities understood about themselves.

According to the data, gun owners of all types lived in the more rural communities where the people had access to open country amenable to hunting, target practice, etc. Those in the more populated communities did not score as highly, however the presence of weapons of all types- especially- is noted; especially in Elizabeth City, where the presence of crime is not unknown. The Outer Banks demonstrates somewhat less interest in firearms; but it has part of a region which is totally dedicated to recreation having to do with the beach and the ocean.

What value would this have to a church planter? As in the survey mentioned earlier about fishing, hunting and hunting clubs abound in this region where the game is among the best on the east coast- especially in the Great Dismal Swamp. The church

planter wanting to make in-roads quickly in these communities would want to find his way into a hunting club or some type of recreational activity, such as skeet shooting, which is also very popular. Christians need to demonstrate that they are real people, who enjoy recreation as much as any other person, and can utilize time for recreation as a basis for contacting and winning souls.

9. The New Work team designed the following question somewhat differently. Instead of a multiple-choice selection, they decided to elicit specific input from the respondent by asking them to indicate, by filling in a blank on the survey sheet, what they considered would make their community of residence a more comfortable or more convenient place in which to live. This question was asked only in the community-based survey because most of the residents of the control group did not live in the region, therefore rendering the question irrelevant to them. However, an alternative question was given to them. The following table lists the highest five responses given per community. Since the number of responses varied from community to community, the number of responses were not given.

Please indicate in your opinion what would make your community a more comfortable or a more convenient place in which to live:

A church planter can consider these survey findings and engage each of these communities by programming his new church to help meet some of these needs. For example, one need that was discovered most frequently in all of the communities was more child care facilities. While the church planter would not have a budget in order to

provide such a service full-time, he can certainly explore ways to meet this need by providing children's activities designed to reach children as well as their parents such as Vacation Bible Schools, Back Yard Bible Clubs, etc. Youth activities were another frequently-mentioned need. A church plant can address this need by providing recreational activities aimed at youth such as basketball camps, surfing lessons and activities (at the beach), youth clubs, etc. Mission teams within North Carolina and out of state can project to provide for these needs through the NCBSB or other state convention or other SBC mission agencies. Another frequently-mentioned need was for better schools and better housing. The church planter may consider launching a program to provide tutoring for children with no financial access to these types of services provided by the public in order to enhance his educational opportunities. Educational opportunities for children and youth are much more limited in rural areas than in more populated areas. Better housing opportunities can be addressed, as stated above, by providing children's activities in multi-family housing areas where recreational activities are few—raising the morale of the community and raising the awareness of Christ through the ministry of the new church. Evangelistic prospects are generated through many of these types of ministries.

9a. The Alternative question posed to the Internet-survey again got them thinking about food. The purpose of this question was to get the respondents to be more selective and to determine indigenoussness in the community.

Question: I like to eat hot sauce on my food.

Once again, another food question but one demonstrating understanding of the culture and identification. As in the barbeque question mentioned earlier, hot sauce (Texas Pete, Tabasco, etc) is very popular and used extensively in the diet. It was asked in order to determine indigenoussness. Another reason for asking the question was that it was an easy one to answer so that the respondent would not become bogged down at the close of what he or she might deem a lengthy survey. The score of the control group in terms of the product popularity was higher than predicted, indicating that hot sauce lovers are not exclusive to the state of North Carolina or even to the surveyed region.

10. Historical awareness survey: Please indicate who, in your opinion, should have won the Civil War?

On the surface, this question appears almost as a joke, or one to extend certain stereotypes of certain people of the region. It is not, but rather to demonstrate historical and cultural awareness of the people of this region, and to determine how closely the residents of this region identify with their southern heritage. Loyalty to the state and to its way of life is rooted in history, and identification to its history is very important. On average, the rural communities scored higher on the opinion that the South should have won the Civil War (49.3 percent), which is almost half of the average poll taken of these communities. 18 percent on average expressed no opinion. In the more populated communities, the number of opinions who felt the South should have won the war were much lower—except in Elizabeth City, where the opinion was almost evenly matched. In the Outer Banks it was decided smaller; with just 29 percent who favored a Southern victory.

Are there any implications for the church planter for these findings? The church planter should not feel as though he is compelled to purchase a Rebel flag to hang from his pickup truck with a gun-rack in the rear windshield. This would certainly be an oversimplification, if not an insult to the intelligent, hard-working, and cultured people who live in this region. However, there are cultural activities that celebrate cultural heritage that do not suggest extremist viewpoints. *The Gravedigger*, for example, is a *Monster Truck* owned by Dennis Anderson.²⁴³ It has a large following in the Albemarle region as well as in other venues across the nation. This would be an excellent activity in which to build relationships, meet people, and make contact with them for the sake of the gospel. There are events, as was already mentioned such as fish fries, civic meeting fund-raising dinners such as the Lion's Club and the Ruritan International organizations which provide excellent venues not only to meet people, but also to listen to people to find out what they are feeling and what their concerns are. Every church planter ought to have a listening ear, no matter what his culture, to listen to people—not just to view them as prospects for his church, but to generate sincerity, trust and love. One item that was not addressed in the research necessarily—although implicit- was that the majority of the people in the region of study, while friendly, are not as accepting to the ideas of people they do not know- particularly those whom they did not know or grow up with. This is as indicative to many communities outside the region as in it. It may take many years of sincere effort on the part of pastors and church planters to gain that trust and that type of influence.

²⁴³ *The Grave Digger*, <http://www.gravedigger.com> (Accessed February 3, 2011).

What did the researcher discover about the *soil* in which the seed of the gospel may be sown? He discovered that there was a certain amount of indigenous characteristic of the people surveyed in northeast North Carolina. Much of it is similar to the wider or national culture, but there are elements which are typical of the region. It is important in understanding how residents of the region view themselves and this would lend great understanding to the church planter in where he will want to plant his church. The church planter would discover from this survey that the region is rich with a cultural heritage all of its own, and that he would be wise to learn more about it as well as the values which shape its residents.

CHAPTER SIX

Recommendations

The following pages are proposals and recommendations developed by, or are being developed by the New Work team of the Chowan Baptist Association in North Carolina, to the respective association and directly to the churches.

1. The New Work team believes that northeastern North Carolina already has enough of the “traditional” type, program-driven churches. This conclusion is based upon the team’s observations that the current model of traditional church is, at best, not keeping pace with the influx of new people moving into northeastern North Carolina. As the baptism rates among these churches may indicate, existing churches are only making a minimal effort to reach these new people. The average membership age of the majority of CBA churches is now above age 60 (comprised of the Builder and younger Boomer populations). At the same time, the U.S. Federal Census, local municipality and school board statistics all indicate, at least for the more populated parts of the region, that the influx is comprised of younger Baby Boomer, Buster, and now Millennial generations. A greater emphasis needs to be centered upon planting new churches focusing on the values of the Buster and Millennial generations. The New Work team strongly believes and suggests that any future church plants should reflect the context of the community/people in which they are planted.

Utilizing the analysis from the research, the strategy developed from the New work team will focus upon new comers who are adapting or have adapted to life in

northeastern North Carolina. Various approaches need to be developed for reaching them, as well as where one is most likely to discover them. The New Work team recommends that a profile of the people in order to develop a greater understanding of the community(s) where the new church plants are likely to be planted.

2. New Work team is poised to serve as a great influence with a role to guide, instruct, and encourage existing churches to plant churches, as well as to encourage and provide advocacy and channel resources to church planters and new congregations.

3. That the New Work team initiates a ministry of prayer highlighting and focusing upon new churches and encouraging existing churches to pray for them. The New Work team could engage the missions organizations of the Chowan Baptist Association, such as the Women's Missionary Union (WMU) and Baptist Men to carry the news of church planting back to their respective churches. It is hoped that they would disseminate the prayer needs to their churches also.

4. The New Work team recommends that the Chowan Baptist Association keep an updated website dedicated to the work of church planting in its *AOR*, highlighting needs of new churches and requests for prayer. It is here that many existing churches can contact the church plants to make themselves available for service and missions projects that the new churches would value.

5. The New Work team recommends that the Chowan Baptist Association conduct periodic training and awareness sessions or meetings among the pastors and other groups highlighting the enterprise of church planting. In fact, whenever the Chowan Baptist

Association conducts an activity, where appropriate, the New Work team ought to give some type of mission-action report telling of the progress of church planting and new congregations in the association.

6. The New Work team should play an active role in initiating church planting mission teams from the seminaries (such as the Nehemiah project and others) to come to the venues selected for new church starts to “break ground” or to establish some presence of church starting in locations in the association.

7. The New Work team needs to play an active and significant role in identifying language and ethnic groups where new congregations can be started and to identify resources accordingly- such as Hispanic, African American, and Asian (Vietnamese, etc) new works.

8. The New Work team recommends to the CBA that the name of their team be changed to more closely identify with their purpose, and that in the future they should be known as the Church Planting team. The reason for this is so that the association, and the team members, may better understand their purpose and function. The New Work team members felt the current designation of the term too broad, and that their purpose could be too easily misunderstood, for example, to investigate and recommend to the association new ministries which the association could be involved (and be expected to maintain). The New Work team feels that such a designation would detract from their focus of planting church.

9. The New Work team, so designated, recommends to the CBA that the purpose of the proposed Church Planting team is to lead the CBA in identifying, researching nurturing, strengthening, and advocating the need for Southern Baptist church plants in northeast North Carolina.

10. The New Work team recommends an increase of the associational budget specifically for the ministry of church planting beginning with five per cent each year for the next ten years. In order for new churches to be planted, they must be financed beyond money that is currently insufficient even to procure the kind of training that is necessary for church planting.

11. Along with the above proposal, the New Work team recommends to each of the associational churches making up the CBA, asking that each contribute at least \$100.00 per church to contribute to the effort of church planting, and that the monies be placed in a special escrow account managed by the team, under the supervision of the CBA, for this purpose. Money underscores commitment. If this were to happen (recognizing that not all of the association's church will choose or are able to do this- however some might even give more), The New Work team recognizes that this is a bold move, but bold measures must also be taken to insure the association's commitment to this vision, as well as to build the principle of church multiplication into each of the 67 churches DNA.

12. The New Work team recommends a goal of planting at least one new church per year for the next ten years. They have considered that this might be too lofty of an expectation at first, but the team also passionately believes that as God is working and driving this

process forward, He will increase the desire among the existing churches to get involved in the vision of church planting throughout the association. Not only that, but the more focus and awareness that is placed on church planting, the more confidence it gives those who are already involved in the work of church planting to explore new areas of growth and to plant more churches. Additionally, even in the initial stages of this strategy formation, new “sprouts” of church plants are beginning to break to the surface of the soil. The New Work team believes and trusts God that this effort cannot help but increase and multiply even beyond the initial expectations.

13. The New Work team recommends that a professional ministry coach or consultant to be secured, with funds from the associational budget, to assist the New Work team to assess the primary places to plant churches and to learn from them. While the New Work team does have a team member who is intimately familiar with how to start churches, he cannot afford the time or be expected to do the work for the association without withdrawing himself from his other ministries.

14. With the coach or church planting consultant, the New Work ministry team recommends that an intense effort be committed toward identifying, tracking and assimilating evangelistic prospects. Finding prospects may be found in a variety of ways.

One writer says,

How does a church planter prospect in a community? A well-used method, with a variety of variations, is the surveying method. Door-to-door, telephone and random contacts in various settings are all designed to get information on people who are lost and/or unchurched. A popular method of prospecting that many planters use today is referred to as “fishing pool events.” These events include

interest meetings, block parties, concerts, etc. that are designed to get groups of people together. From these groups the planter seeks to identify the few of the group who are receptive to the gospel.²⁴⁴

15. Along with developing ways to find evangelistic prospects and interested people, the New Work team recommends a that the church planting strategy for evangelism and finding new people ought to be sensitive to the community and the ministry focus group's profile. Colbert says, "That profile plays an important role in thinking about the evangelistic approaches that might be most effective in the community."²⁴⁵ There are actually two basic profiles generated from the people of the studied region: there is the so-termed Albemarle profile and the Beach profile. The Albemarle profile are viewed more closely as natives of the area, whereas the Beach profile, who are mostly residents of the Outer Banks, are more widely diverse because most of them originate from areas outside the region or the state.

16. In order to promote the need to sponsoring churches, the New Work team recommends that resources to partnering or sponsoring churches be made available to the Chowan Baptist Association. Such resources may be found on the Church Planting Village website of the North American Mission Board. However, it would be better to have the booklets downloaded, copied, and distributed to the CBA office and resource

²⁴⁴ H. Gerald Colbert, *Building an Evangelism Strategy for the New Church*, (Alpharetta, GA: North American Mission Board: Church Planter Network Resource, Evangelism) <http://www.churchplantingvillage.net>, (Accessed February 1, 2011), P. 6.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 4.

center so that it can be easily accessed by those interested in learning about the dynamics of sponsoring new church plants.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ North American Mission Board Resource: <http://www.churchplantingvillage.net>. (Accessed January 13, 2011).

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APPENDIX I

Sample of Permission Letter Sent to Research Venues

Salem Baptist Church

1401 Salem Church Road
Elizabeth City, NC 27909
(252) 330-4272
Rev. Jeffery C. Russell, Pastor (252) 340-3272

Food Lion Stores
1515 Ehringhaus Street
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

October 18, 2010

Dear Manager,

My name is Jeffery Russell, a local pastor who is doing a marketing research project to understand the needs of people in our community.

I kindly request your permission to conduct a survey of your patrons with a poll of no more than twenty questions. I would not be asking them to identify themselves or to reveal any personal information. I need no more than 100 respondents to complete my survey.

I am also attaching the survey question sheets to this letter so you will know the nature of the survey questions asked.

If you feel you would be interested in the information from the respondents for your marketing purposes, I would be very happy to share it with you.

I will be contacting you soon to follow up and to determine the best day for my survey. I will do my best to be as unobtrusive to your customers as possible and will handle myself with utmost professionalism and courtesy. If you have any questions, I would be very happy to speak with you. My phone number is (252) 340-3272.

Thank you for your consideration and help with my project.

APPENDIX II
Market Survey Materials
Market Survey

Location: _____

Date _____

Researcher _____

1. Gender _____ Male _____ Female

2. Racial/Ethnic Heritage (Please mark all that apply)

_____ Caucasian _____ Hispanic _____ Asian

_____ Other

_____ African-American _____ Native American _____ Pacific
Islander

3. Educational background (please select all that apply)

_____ elementary _____ secondary _____ high school
diploma _____ G.E.D. _____ College

_____ Graduate degree _____ Technical training

4. Generational Grouping (please indicate one):

I was born between years:

1918-1945 _____

1945-1964 _____

1965-1980 _____

1980- _____

5. Religious/Spiritual Background (please indicate one):

Christian : _____ Protestant _____ Catholic _____ Orthodox _____
_____ Mormon _____ Jehovah's Witness _____ Other
_____ Jewish _____ Islam _____ Hindu _____ Other
_____ No Religious Affiliation

6. If you attend church, please select the type music that you prefer:

_____ organ quiet and respectful _____ traditional hymns _____ happy/clappy
_____ filled with choruses _____ Gospel _____ no preference

Interests

7. Please indicate what type of TV show would you prefer to watch (choose one)

___ Discovery Channel ___ Home and
Garden ___ History ___ Lifetime ___ MTV ___ SciFi ___ Disney ___ National
Geographic ___ ABC
Family ___ TVLand ___ ComedyCentral ___ ESPN ___ CMT ___ BET ___
Food ___ TLC ___ TBS ___ USA ___ FOX ___ Wildlife

8. What news channels do you regularly watch? (choose one)

___ ABC ___ CBS ___ NBC ___ CNN ___ FOX News

9. What type of sports programs do you watch on television? (indicate all that apply)

_____ Football _____ Baseball _____ Basketball _____ Soccer _____

Hockey _____ Other

10 . What type of music best describes you? (Choose two)

___ Country-Western ___ Classical ___ Hip Hop ___ Rock ___ Pop
___ Alternative ___ Rap ___ Christian ___ Other

Survey II Cultural Awareness Survey

1. Please indicate the type of home you live in: (Please select one).

Stick-built	A double-wide home	A single-wide trailer
An apartment	None of the above	

2. I enjoy eating the following foods: (Please select all that apply).

Pork BBQ	Cole Slaw	Fried Chicken
Catfish	Chicken Pot-pie	None of the above

3. When I eat Pork BBQ, I enjoy it with (Please select one):

_____ Vinegar-based sauce

_____ Catsup-based sauce

_____ No sauce

_____ None of the above

4. When going fishing, I enjoy catching (please respond the type fish you typically catch):

_____ Catfish _____ Striped Bass _____ None of the above (N/A).

_____ Trout _____ Perch

5. I own a pick-up truck (Please Answer either yes or no). _____ Yes _____ No.

6. I live with my: (Please indicate one response for the following):

_____ My spouse _____ Significant other _____ Mother _____ None of the above.

7. Geographic awareness. Describe the terrain in which you live (Please select one):

_____ City _____ Suburb _____ Country town _____ Mountains _____ Farmland

_____Swamp _____None of the above

8. Gun possession. Please indicate if you own the following types of weapons for recreation or for protection (you may answer more than one response):

_____Rifle _____Shotgun _____Handgun _____All of the above _____None of the above.

9. What in your opinion would make this community a more comfortable or a more convenient place in which to live? (Please fill in the blank with one answer).

10. Historical awareness survey: Please indicate who, in your opinion, should have won the Civil War?

_____North _____South _____No opinion.

Thank you for helping us by taking this survey.

APPENDIX III.
Research Tables

Responses for survey questions and tabulated results.

1. Gender:

Community-Based	Internet/Email Based
Male: 34.7 percent	Males: 35.7
Female: 65.3 percent	Females: 64.3

2. Ethnic/Racial heritage (please indicate all that apply):

Community Based	Internet/Email Based
Caucasian 59.59 percent	Caucasian 94.4 percent
Hispanic: 2.19 percent	Hispanic 0.0 percent
African-American 37.26 percent	African-American 0.0 percent
Asian: 1.12 percent	Asian 2.8 percent
Native American 0.38 percent	Native American 1.4 percent
Pacific Islander 0.02 percent	Pacific Islander 0.0 percent
Other 1.63 percent	Other 1.4 percent

3. Educational background (please select all that apply):

Internet-based Survey

Elementary 35.6 percent
Secondary 32.9 percent
High school diploma 50.7 percent
G.E.D. 4.1 percent
Military skill training 8.2 percent
Technical 6.8 percent
College 58.9 percent
Graduate degree 13.7 percent

Community-based survey:

Columbia	Edenton	Gates County
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Elementary 17.5 percent Secondary 14.3 percent High School Diploma 15.4 percent G.E.D. 7.9 percent Military Training 4.5 percent Technical 14.4 percent College 10.3 percent Graduate degree 3.4 percent	Elementary 16.3 percent Secondary 15.6 percent High School Diploma 17.5 percent G.E.D. 6.5 percent Military Training 5.3 percent Technical 13.5 percent College 12.8 percent Graduate degree 4.5 percent	Elementary 18.4 percent Secondary 14.3 percent High School Diploma 16.4 percent G.E.D. 8.7 percent Military Training 5.3 percent Technical 12.5 percent College 9.4 percent Graduate degree 2.5 percent
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4. Generational Grouping Please select from the following the years under which you were born:

Internet-based survey:

1918-1945 (Builder) 8.3 percent
1945-1964 (Boomer) 63.9 percent
1965-1980 (Buster) 15.3 percent
1980- (Millennial) 12.5 percent ⁹

Community Based survey:

Columbia 1918-1945 (Builder) 32 percent 1945-1964 (Boomer) 34 percent 1965-1980 (Buster) 21 percent 1980- (Millennial) 13 percent	Edenton 1918-1945 (Builder) 33 percent 1945-1964 (Boomer) 29 percent 1965-1980 (Buster) 23 percent 1980- (Millennial) 15 percent	Gates County 1918-1945 (Builder) 16 percent 1945-1964 (Boomer) 40 percent 1965-1980 (Buster) 32 percent 1980- (Millennial) 12 percent
Elizabeth City 1918-1945 (Builder) 15 percent 1945-1964 (Boomer) 41 percent 1965-1980 (Buster) 32 percent 1980- (Millennial) 12 percent	Moyock 1918-1945 (Builder) 21 percent 1945-1964 (Boomer) 33 percent 1965-1980 (Buster) 29 percent 1980- (Millennial) 17 percent	Outer Banks 1918-1945 (Builder) 27 percent 1945-1964 (Boomer) 24 percent 1965-1980 (Buster) 26 percent 1980- (Millennial) 23 percent

percent	percent	percent
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5. The next question that was surveyed was religious preference. Please indicate, if any, your religious background (Please Check all that apply):

The control group on-line survey produced the following results:

Christian Protestant 83.6 percent	Christian Catholic 8.2 percent	Christian Orthodox 1.4 percent
Mormon 1.4 percent	Jehovah's Witnesses 0.0 percent	Jewish 2.7 percent
Islam 0.0 percent	Hindu 0.0 percent	Buddist 0.0 percent

Community-Based Religious Background Survey

Columbia

Edenton

Gates County

Christian Protestant 76 percent	Christian Protestant 74 percent	Christian Protestant 78 percent
Christian Catholic 6 percent	Christian Catholic 8 percent	Christian Catholic 6 percent
Christian Orthodox 0 percent	Christian Orthodox 1 percent	Christian Orthodox 0 percent
Mormon 3 percent	Mormon 1 percent	Mormon 1 percent
Jehovah's Witnesses 2 percent	Jehovah's Witnesses 1 percent	Jehovah's Witnesses 1 percent
Jewish 0 percent	Jewish 1 percent	Jewish 0 percent
Islam 0.0 percent	Islam 0.0 percent	Islam 1 percent
Hindu 0.0 percent	Hindu 0.0 percent	Hindu 0.0 percent
Buddist 0.0 percent	Buddist 0.0 percent	Buddist 0.0 percent
Other Faith Group 8 percent	Other Faith Group 9 percent	Other Faith Group 7 percent
No religious affiliation 5 percent	No religious affiliation 5 percent	No religious affiliation 6 percent

6. If you attend church, please select the type music that you prefer:

Internet-based survey:

Type Music	Percentages
Organ	5.5 percent
Traditional hymns and melodies	41.1 percent
“Happy/clappy”	4.1 percent
Contemporary and praise	52.1 percent

Gospel	9.6 percent
No preference	12.3 percent

Community-based survey:

Columbia Organ 7 percent Traditional hymns 39 percent “Happy/clappy” 3 percent Contemporary and praise 24 percent Gospel 10 percent No preference 7 percent	Edenton Organ 9 percent Traditional hymns 41 percent “Happy/clappy” 2 percent Contemporary and praise 26 percent Gospel 11 percent No preference 11 percent	Gates County Organ 8 percent Traditional hymns 45 percent “Happy/clappy” 3 percent Contemporary and praise 22 percent Gospel 12 percent No preference 10 percent
Elizabeth City Organ 8 percent Traditional hymns 35 percent “Happy/clappy” 4 percent Contemporary and praise 30 percent Gospel 15 percent No preference 8 percent	Moyock Organ 7 percent Traditional hymns 37 percent “Happy/clappy” 3 percent Contemporary and praise 41 percent Gospel 9 percent No preference 3 percent	Outer Banks Organ 5 percent Traditional hymns 28 percent “Happy/clappy” 5 percent Contemporary and praise 46 percent Gospel 12 percent No preference 4 percent

7. Television Program Surveys:

Control Group (Internet Based Survey):

Discovery Channel	Percentage 65.8 percent	Respondents 48
Home and Garden	45.2 percent	33
History	60.3 percent	44
Lifetime	35.6 percent	26
MTV	6.8 percent	5
SciFi	20.5 percent	15
Disney	16.4 percent	12
National Geographic	39.7 percent	29

Again each of the six Albemarle communities was probed with four different surveys

following results indicated:

Community-based Survey:

<p style="text-align: center;">Columbia</p> <p>Discovery Channel 62 percent</p> <p>Home and Garden 41 percent</p> <p>History 65 percent</p> <p>Lifetime 23 percent</p> <p>MTV 2 percent</p> <p>SciFi 15 percent</p> <p>Disney 12 percent</p> <p>National Geographic 45 percent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Moyock</p> <p>Discovery Channel 70 percent</p> <p>Home and Garden 48 percent</p> <p>History 72 percent</p> <p>Lifetime 37 percent</p> <p>MTV 11 percent</p> <p>SciFi 23 percent</p> <p>Disney 18 percent</p> <p>National Geographic 43 percent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Edenton</p> <p>Discovery Channel 59 percent</p> <p>Home and Garden 44 percent</p> <p>History 63 percent</p> <p>Lifetime 29 percent</p> <p>MTV 7 percent</p> <p>SciFi 19 percent</p> <p>Disney 14 percent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">National Geographic 41 percent</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Elizabeth City</p> <p>Discovery Channel 69 percent</p> <p>Home and Garden 47 percent</p> <p>History 74 percent</p> <p>Lifetime 36 percent</p> <p>MTV 19 percent</p> <p>SciFi 22 percent</p> <p>Disney 18 percent</p> <p>(Cont) National Geographic 40 percent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Gates County</p> <p>Discovery Channel 60 percent</p> <p>Home and Garden 43 percent</p> <p>History 64 percent</p> <p>Lifetime 26 percent</p> <p>MTV 4 percent</p> <p>SciFi 14 percent</p> <p>Disney 10 percent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">National Geographic 32 percent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Outer Banks</p> <p>Discovery Channel 74 percent</p> <p>Home and Garden 52 percent</p> <p>History 72 percent</p> <p>Lifetime 42 percent</p> <p>MTV 22 percent</p> <p>SciFi 25 percent</p> <p>Disney 24 percent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">National Geographic 43 percent</p>

Survey Two was conducted with more specialized channels in mind.

Internet-based survey

ABC Family	39.7 percent	29
TVLand	28.8 percent	21
ComedyCentral	20.5 percent	15
Reality	8.2 percent	6
ESPN	23.3 percent	17
CMT	12.3 percent	9
BET	0.0 percent	0

Community-based survey

<p>Columbia</p> <p>ABC Family 42 percent TVLand 29 percent Comedy Central 14 percent Reality 5 percent ESPN 35 percent CMT 27 percent BET 4 percent</p>	<p>Moyock</p> <p>ABC Family 47 percent TVLand 32 Comedy Central 21 percent Reality 9 percent ESPN 26 percent CMT 21 percent BET 1 percent</p>	<p>Edenton</p> <p>ABC Family 41 percent TVLand 27 percent Comedy Central 13 percent Reality 7 percent ESPN 34 percent CMT 26 percent BET 0 percent</p>
<p>Elizabeth City</p> <p>ABC Family 45 percent TVLand 35 percent Comedy Central 23 percent Reality 9 percent ESPN 32 percent CMT 30 percent BET 7 percent</p>	<p>Gates County</p> <p>ABC Family 38 percent TVLand 30 percent Comedy Central 12 percent Reality 7 percent ESPN 36 percent CMT 33 percent BET 1 percent</p>	<p>Outer Banks</p> <p>ABC Family 40 percent TVLand 32 percent Comedy Central 28 percent Reality 18 percent ESPN 28 percent CMT 10 percent BET 6 percent</p>

Survey Three also involved specialized television viewing over a wide range of topics.
Internet-based survey:

Food	42.5 percent	31
TLC	35.6 percent	26
TBS	32.9 percent	24
USA	41.1 percent	30
FOX	53.4 percent	39
Wildlife/Sportsman	12.3 percent	9

Community survey:

<p>Columbia</p> <p>Food 21 percent TLC 27 percent TBS 22 percent USA 32 percent FOX 54 percent Wildlife/Sportsman 34 percent</p>	<p>Moyock</p> <p>Food 43 percent TLC 35 percent TBS 36 percent USA 42 percent FOX 44 percent Wildlife/Sportsman 29 percent</p>	<p>Edenton</p> <p>Food 28 percent TLC 26 percent TBS 27 percent USA 36 percent FOX 54 percent Wildlife/Sportsman 32 percent</p>
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Elizabeth City	Gates County	Outer Banks
Food 44 percent TLC 37 percent TBS 39 percent USA 45 percent FOX 47 percent Wildlife/Sportsman 22 percent	Food 18 percent TLC 26 percent TBS 25 percent USA 33 percent FOX 55 percent Wildlife/Sportsman 34 percent	Food 45 percent TLC 36 percent TBS 38 percent USA 43 percent FOX 32 percent Wildlife/Sportsman 28 percent

8. What TV news channels do you regularly watch (please choose one):

Internet-based survey:

ABC 16.4 percent	CNN 6.8 percent
CBS 6.8 percent	MSNBC 4.1 percent
NBC 26.0 percent	FOX 39.7 percent

Community-based survey:

Columbia	Edenton	Gates County
ABC 26 percent CBS 13 percent NBC 17 percent CNN 9 percent MSNBC 5 percent FOX 30 percent	ABC 24 percent CBS 15 percent NBC 16 percent CNN 11 percent MSNBC 4 percent FOX 30 percent	ABC 22 percent CBS 18 percent NBC 14 percent CNN 9 percent MSNBC 5 percent FOX 32 percent
Elizabeth City	Moyock	Outer Banks
ABC 29 percent CBS 16 percent NBC 14 percent CNN 12 percent MSNBC 3 percent FOX 26 percent	ABC 31 percent CBS 23 percent NBC 16 percent CNN 11 percent MSNBC 5 percent FOX 14 percent	ABC 35 percent CBS 25 percent NBC 19 percent CNN 14 percent MSNBC 3 percent FOX 4 percent

9. What type of sports programs do you watch on television (indicate all that apply)

Internet survey:²⁴⁷

Football 61.5 percent	Baseball 26.2 percent	Basketball 26.2 percent
Soccer 9.2 percent	Hockey 12.3 percent	Nascar/Stock Car 23.1 percent

Other 32.3 percent

Community based survey:

<p>Columbia</p> <p>Football 53 percent Baseball 23 percent Basketball 54 percent Soccer 4 percent Hockey 3 percent Nascar/Stock Car 57 percent Other 27 percent</p>	<p>Edenton</p> <p>Football 49 percent Baseball 26 percent Basketball 54 percent Soccer 6 percent Hockey 5 percent Nascar/Stock Car 59 percent Other 22 percent</p>	<p>Gates County</p> <p>Football 51 percent Baseball 24 percent Basketball 56 percent Soccer 4 percent Hockey 2 percent Nascar/Stock Car 62 percent Other 24 percent</p>
<p>Elizabeth City</p> <p>Football 56 percent Baseball 25 percent Basketball 54 percent Soccer 7 percent Hockey 6 percent Nascar/Stock Car 56 percent Other 25 percent</p>	<p>Moyock</p> <p>Football 55 percent Baseball 27 percent Basketball 53\$ percent Soccer 9 percent Hockey 6 percent Nascar/Stock Car 45 percent Other 23 percent</p>	<p>Outer Banks</p> <p>Football 59 percent Baseball 32 percent Basketball 49 percent Soccer 11 percent Hockey 9 percent Nascar/Stock Car 32 percent Other 24 percent</p>

10. What type of music best describes you or that you listen to the most? (Choose one)

Internet survey

Country-Western 21.6 percent	Classical 1.4 percent
Hip Hop 1.4 percent	Rock 13.5 percent

²⁴⁷ Nine people of the control group skipped this question.

Pop 13.5 percent	Alternative 6.8 percent
Rap 0.0 percent	Oldies 14.9 percent
Christian 27.0 percent	Other 4.1 percent

Community based survey

<p>Columbia</p> <p>Country-Western 25 percent Classical 0 percent Hip Hop 1 percent Rock 14 percent Pop 15 percent Alternative 2 percent Rap 0 percent Oldies 15 percent Other 28 percent</p>	<p>Edenton</p> <p>Country-Western 23 percent Classical 2 percent Hip Hop 2 percent Rock 15 percent Pop 16 percent Alternative 5 percent Rap 1 percent Oldies 13 percent Other 23 percent</p>	<p>Gates County</p> <p>Country-Western 24 percent Classical 1 percent Hip Hop 0 percent Rock 13 percent Pop 14 percent Alternative 3 percent Rap 0 percent Oldies 12 percent Other</p>
<p>Elizabeth City</p> <p>Country-Western 22 percent Classical 4 percent Hip Hop 4 percent Rock 18 percent Pop 17 percent Alternative 4 percent Rap 8 percent Oldies 12 percent Other 11 percent</p>	<p>Moyock</p> <p>Country-Western 21 percent Classical 4 percent Hip Hop 3 percent Rock 17 percent Pop 16 percent Alternative 4 percent Rap 4 percent Oldies 13 percent Other 18 percent</p>	<p>Outer Banks</p> <p>Country-Western 18 percent Classical 6 percent Hip Hop 2 percent Rock 20 percent Pop 17 percent Alternative 6 percent Rap 3 percent Oldies 10 percent Other 18 percent</p>

8. Type of Dwelling. Respondents were asked to indicate the type of home in which they lived. "Please indicate the type of home you live in":

Internet-based survey

Type of residence Percentage Number

A. A “stick” built house	58 percent	58
B. A double-wide home	2 percent	2
C. A single-wide trailer	2 percent	2
D. An apartment	4 percent	4
E. None of the above	34 percent	34

Community-based survey:

Columbia A “stick” built house 45 percent A double-wide home 27 percent A single-wide trailer 18 percent An apartment 7 percent None of the above 3 percent	Moyock A “stick” built house 56 percent A double-wide home 21 percent A single-wide trailer 5 percent An apartment 18 percent None of the above 0 percent
Edenton A “stick” built house 47 percent A double-wide home 29 percent A single-wide trailer 14 percent An apartment 10 percent None of the above 0 percent	Elizabeth City A “stick” built house 56 percent A double-wide home 23 percent A single-wide trailer 6 percent An apartment 15 percent None of the above 0 percent
Gates County A “stick” built house 43 percent A double-wide home 32 percent A single-wide trailer 19 percent An apartment 3 percent None of the above 3 percent	Outer Banks A “stick” built house 49 percent A double-wide home 12 percent A single-wide trailer 3 percent An apartment 36 percent None of the above 0 percent

2. I enjoy eating the following foods:

Internet-based survey:

Response	Percentage	Number
A. Pork BBQ	67 percent	67
B. Cole Slaw	53 percent	53
C. Fried Chicken	66 percent	66
D. Cat Fish	34 percent	34

Community-based survey

<p>Columbia</p> <p>Vinegar-based sauce 80 percent Catsup-based sauce 17 percent No sauce 3 percent None of the above 0 percent</p>	<p>Moyock</p> <p>Vinegar-based sauce 75 percent Catsup-based sauce 10 percent No sauce 15 percent None of the above 0 percent</p>
<p>Edenton</p> <p>Vinegar-based sauce 78 percent Catsup-based sauce 12 percent No sauce 8 percent None of the above 2 percent</p>	<p>Elizabeth City</p> <p>Vinegar-based sauce 74 percent Catsup-based sauce 15 percent No sauce 10 percent None of the above 1 percent</p>
<p>Gates County</p> <p>Vinegar-based sauce 85 percent Catsup-based sauce 4 percent No sauce 11 percent None of the above 0 percent</p>	<p>Outer Banks</p> <p>Vinegar-based sauce 61 percent Catsup-based sauce 23 percent No sauce 12 percent None of the above 4 percent</p>

4. When going fishing, I enjoy catching (please respond the type fish you typically catch)

Internet-based survey:

Response	Percentage	Number
A. Catfish	19.4 percent	19
B. Trout	35.7 percent	35
C. Striped Bass	35.7 percent	35
D. Perch	25.5 percent	25
E. None of the above	38.8 percent	38 ²⁴⁸

Community-based survey:

<p>Columbia</p> <p>Cat fish 55 percent</p>	<p>Moyock</p> <p>Cat fish 41 percent</p>
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²⁴⁸ Two respondents skipped this question.

Trout 21 percent Striped Bass 78 percent Perch 63 percent None of the Above 21 percent	Trout 22 percent Striped Bass 69 percent Perch 52 percent None of the Above 26 percent
Edenton Cat fish 59 percent Trout 18 percent Striped Bass 82 percent Perch 69 percent None of the Above 14 percent	Elizabeth City Cat fish 56 percent Trout 15 percent Striped Bass 83 percent Perch 72 percent None of the Above 17 percent
Gates County Cat fish 61 percent Trout 15 percent Striped Bass 76 percent Perch 65 percent None of the Above 18 percent	Outer Banks Cat fish 49 percent Trout 22 percent Striped Bass 78 percent Perch 28 percent None of the Above 32 percent

5. I own a pick-up truck (Please Answer either yes or no).

Internet-based survey:

Response	Percentage	Number
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Yes	48 percent	48
No	52 percent	52

Community-based survey:

Columbia Yes 68 percent No 32 percent	Moyock Yes 49 percent No 51 percent
Edenton Yes 67 percent No 33 percent	Elizabeth City Yes 58 percent No 42
Gates County Yes 72 percent	Outer Banks Yes 46 percent

No 28 percent	No 54 percent
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6. I live with my: (Please indicate one response for the following)

Internet-based survey:

Response Percentage Number

A. Spouse	72 percent	72
B. Significant Other	4 percent	4
C. Mother	4 percent	4
D. None of the Above	20 percent	20

Community-based survey

<p>Columbia</p> <p>Spouse 67 percent Significant Other 11 percent Mother 6 percent None of the Above 16 percent</p>	<p>Moyock</p> <p>Spouse 72 percent Significant Other 15 percent Mother 1 percent None of the Above 12 percent</p>
<p>Edenton</p> <p>Spouse 69 percent Significant Other 12 percent Mother 2 percent None of the Above 17 percent</p>	<p>Elizabeth City</p> <p>Spouse 74 percent Significant Other 9 percent Mother 2 percent None of the Above 15 percent</p>
<p>Gates County</p> <p>Spouse 65 percent Significant Other 14 percent Mother 3 percent None of the Above 18 percent</p>	<p>Outer Banks</p> <p>Spouse 62 percent Significant Other 23 percent Mother 0 percent None of the Above 15 percent</p>

7. Geographic awareness survey. The purpose in generating this question is to generate awareness of the geographic environment in which one lives.

Please describe the terrain in which you live (Please select one):

Internet-based survey:

Response	Percentage	Number
A. City	23 percent	23
B. Suburb	20 percent	20
C. Country town	22 percent	22
D. Mountains	7 percent	7
E. Farmland	21 percent	21
F. The Swamp	2 percent	2
G. None of the Above	5 percent	5

Community-based survey

<p>Columbia</p> <p>City 3 percent Suburb 2 percent Country town 74 percent Mountains 0 percent Farmland 15 percent The Swamp None of the Above</p>	<p>Moyock</p> <p>City 4 percent Suburb 76 percent Country town Mountains 0 percent Farmland 17 percent The Swamp 4 percent None of the Above</p>
<p>Edenton</p> <p>City 5 percent Suburb 6 percent Country town 68 percent Mountains 0 percent Farmland 14 percent The Swamp 5 percent None of the Above 2 percent</p>	<p>Elizabeth City</p> <p>City 55 percent Suburb 13 percent Country town 22 percent Mountains 0 percent Farmland 10 percent The Swamp 0 percent None of the Above 0 percent</p>
<p>Gates County</p>	<p>Outer Banks</p>

City 3 percent Suburb 5 percent Country town 44 percent Mountains 0 percent Farmland 33 percent The Swamp 15 percent ²⁴⁹ None of the Above 0 percent	City 26 percent Suburb 29 percent Country town 27 percent Mountains 0 percent Farmland 12 percent The Swamp 3 percent None of the Above 3 percent
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8. Gun possession. Respondents were asked to provide information concerning a type of weapon they might possess for the purposes of protection or recreation.

Please indicate if you own the following types of weapons for recreation or for protection (you may answer more than one response):

Internet-based survey:

Response	Percentage	Number
A. Handgun	9.1 percent	9
B. Shotgun	18.2 percent	18
C. Rifle	16.2 percent	16
D. All of the above	22.2 percent	22
E. None of the above	49.5	49 ²⁵⁰

Community-based survey:

Columbia Handgun 17 percent Shotgun 35 percent Rifle 34 percent	Moyock Handgun 9 percent Shotgun 23 percent Rifle 19 percent
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²⁴⁹ The Great Dismal Swamp-many places are very habitable at the outer limits.

²⁵⁰ One respondent skipped the question.

All of the above 43 percent None of the above 14 percent	All of the above 19 percent None of the above 30 percent
Edenton Handgun 16 percent Shotgun 34 percent Rifle 22 percent All of the above 23 percent None of the above 16 percent	Elizabeth City Handgun 17 percent Shotgun 26 percent Rifle 24 percent All of the above 18 percent None of the above 18 percent
Gates County Handgun 21 percent Shotgun 45 percent Rifle 44 percent All of the above 22 percent None of the above 15 percent	Outer Banks Handgun 4 percent Shotgun 15 percent Rifle 13 percent All of the above 12 percent None of the above 52 percent

9. Please indicate in your opinion what would make your community a more comfortable or a more convenient place in which to live:

Columbia Access to better shopping Better medical facilities More child care facilities Better youth activities Improved highway system	Edenton Better county government More youth activities Better schools Better employment opportunities Better Infrastructure	Gates Better schools More youth activities More child care facilities Better employment opportunities No OLF ²⁵¹
Elizabeth City Better city government Remove gang influence	Moyock Better traffic control More youth activities	Outer Banks Better traffic control Affordable housing

²⁵¹ OLF- Outlying Landing Field, a controversial item in northeast North Carolina where the U.S. Navy has proposed securing imminent domain of large tracts of farmland in order to land navy fighter jets and other aircraft for training and exercise purposes. At the time of writing, the U.S. Navy decided not to proceed with their proposal in response to political pressure.

Mass transit to Hampton Roads More child care facilities Control housing development	Better county government Affordable housing Access to better shopping No OLF	Improved community relations More child care facilities Access to better shopping.
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9a. The Alternative question posed to the Internet-survey again got them thinking about food. The purpose of this question was to get the respondents to be more selective and to determine indigenoussness in the community.

Question: I like to eat hot sauce on my food.

Internet-based survey:

Response	Percentage	Number
A. Yes	53.5 percent	53
B. No	46.5 percent	46 ²⁵²

10. Historical awareness survey: Please indicate who, in your opinion, should have won the Civil War?

Internet-based survey:

Response	Percentage	Number
A. The North	40 percent	40
B. The South	26 percent	26
C. No opinion	34 percent	34

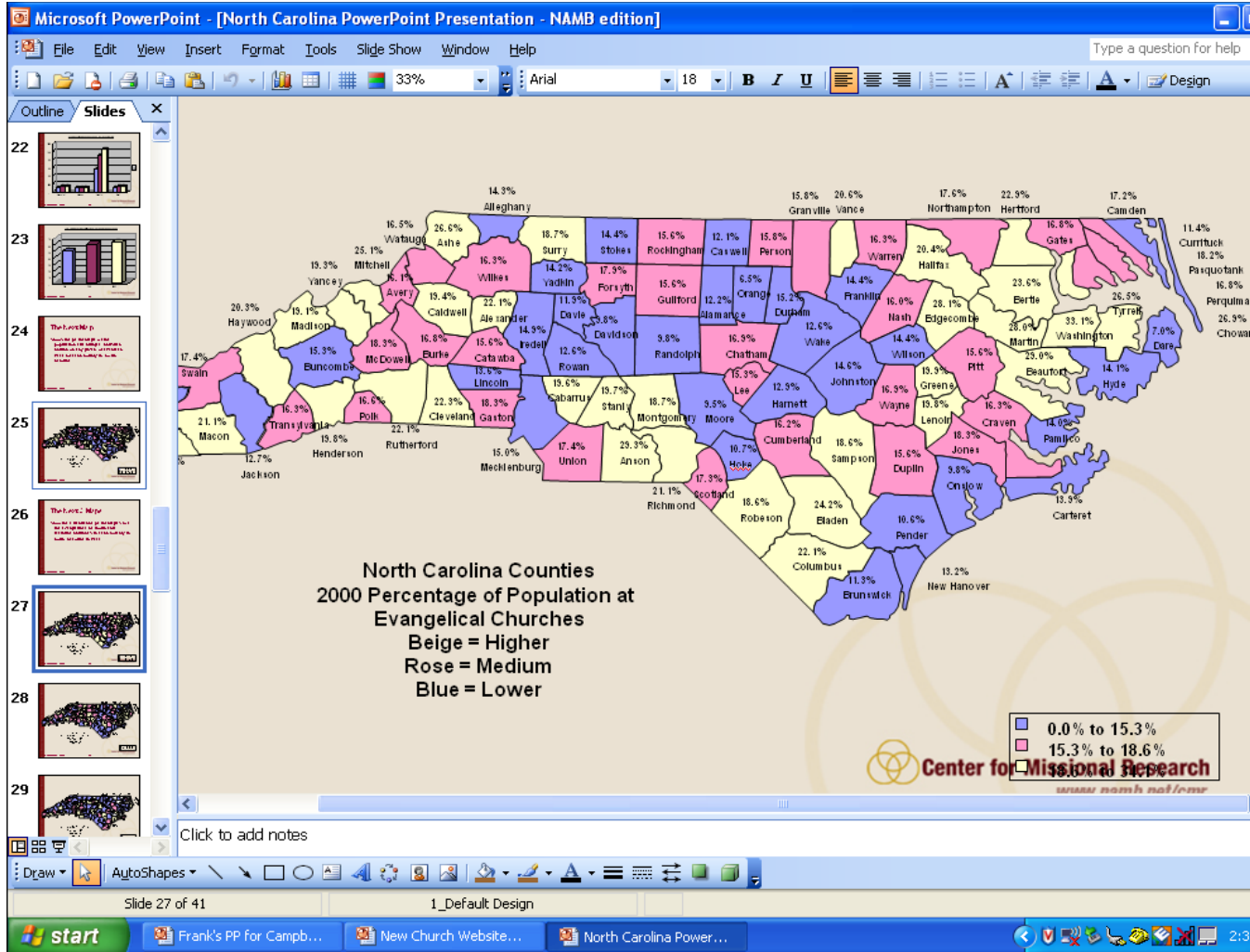
Community-based survey:

²⁵² One respondent skipped the question.

<p>Columbia</p> <p>The North 35 percent The South 40 percent No opinion 25 percent</p>	<p>Moyock</p> <p>The North 48 percent The South 35 percent No opinion 17 percent</p>
<p>Edenton</p> <p>The North 34 percent The South 52 percent No opinion 14 percent</p>	<p>Elizabeth City</p> <p>The North 45 percent The South 44 percent No opinion 11 percent</p>
<p>Gates County</p> <p>The North 29 percent The South 56 percent No opinion 15 percent</p>	<p>Outer Banks</p> <p>The North 57 percent The South 29 percent No opinion 14 percent</p>

APPENDIX IV.

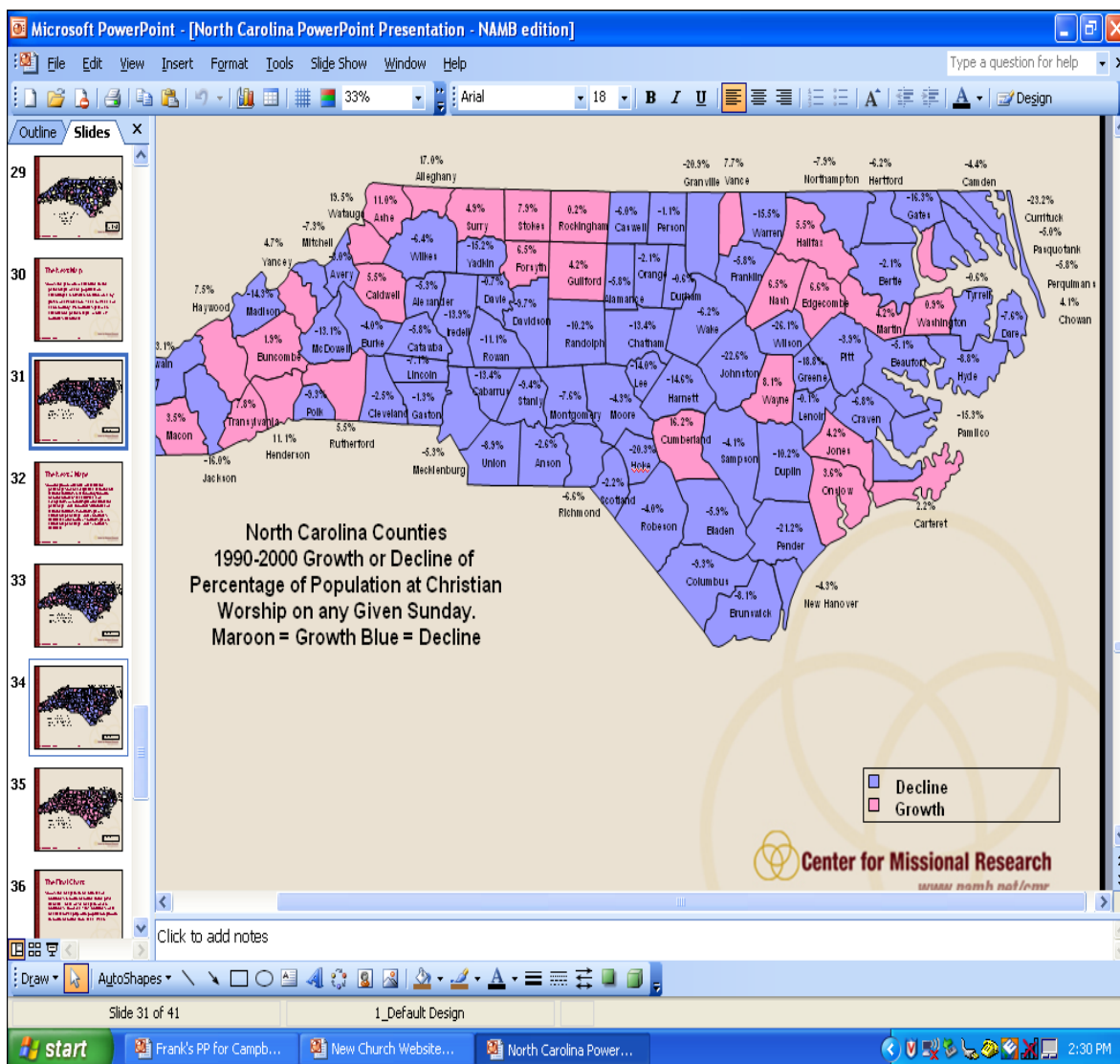
Percentage of Population at Evangelical Churches²⁵³



²⁵³ North American Mission Board: Center for Missional Research, <http://www.namb.net/cmrr/>, (accessed January 10, 2011.)

APPENDIX V.

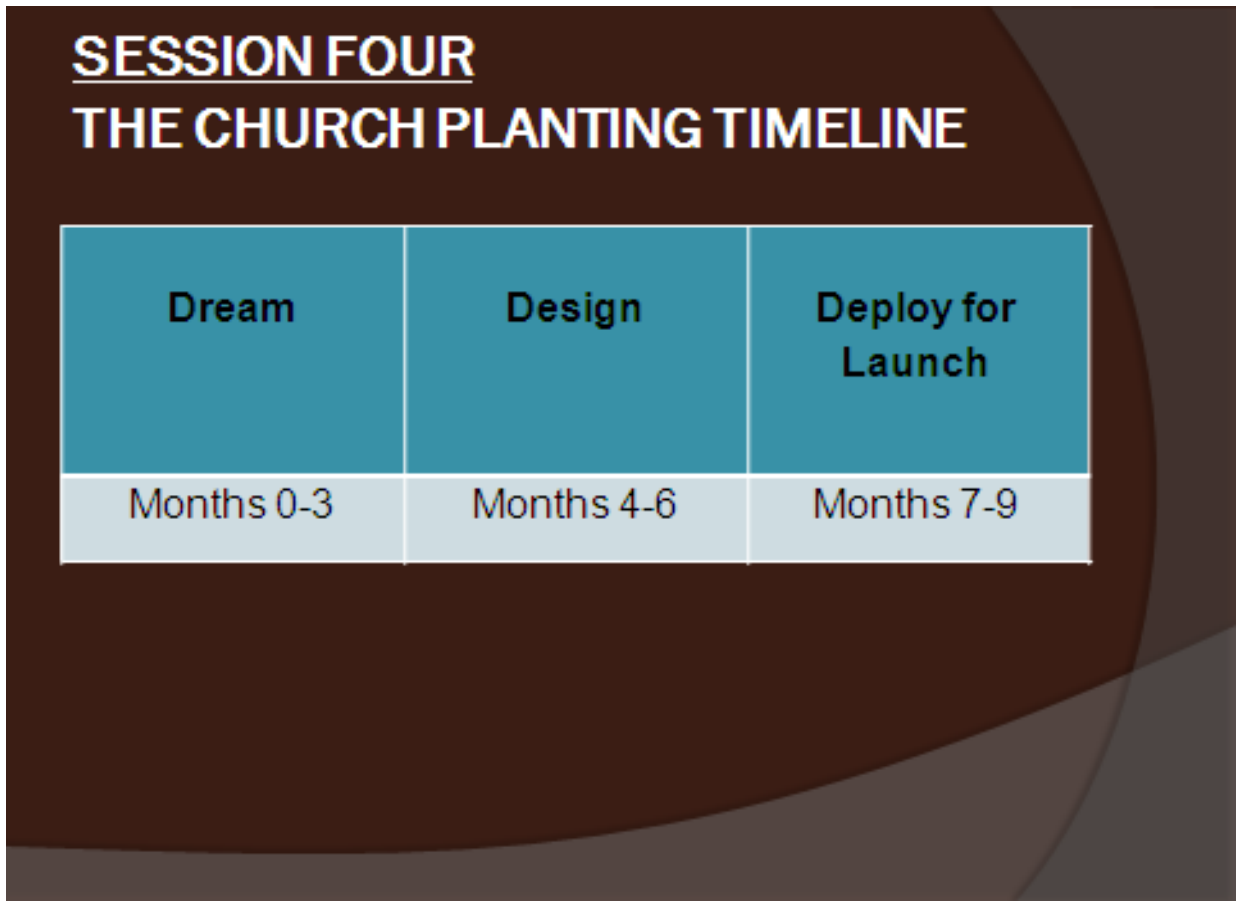
North Carolina Counties: 1990-2000 Growth or Decline of Percentage of Population at Christian Worship on any Given Sunday.²⁵⁴



²⁵⁴ North American Mission Board: Center for Missional Research, <http://www.namb.net/cmnr/>, (accessed January 10, 2011).

APPENDIX VI.

*The Church Planting Timeline*²⁵⁵



²⁵⁵ Presentation by Frank White, North Carolina Baptist State Convention to Chowan Baptist Association, (January 4, 2011).

VITA

Jeffery Clark Russell

PERSONAL

Born: February 1, 1961

Married: Robin Lynne Hathaway Russell, November 20, 1982

Children: John William Russell, born August 26, 1989

Jared Edwin Russell, born February 24, 1991

Jinger Marie Russell, born June 18, 1993.

EDUCATIONAL

B.A., Criminal Justice/Political Science, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia, 1983.

M. Div., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, 1986.

MINISTERIAL

License to Preach: Kempsville Baptist Church, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 1981.

Ordination: July 14, 1986, Kempsville Baptist Church, Virginia Beach, Virginia.

PROFESSIONAL

Pastor, First Baptist Church, Zelienople, Pennsylvania, June 1986-June 1991.

Pastor, Wildwood Baptist Church, Bethesda, Maryland, June 1991-August 1995.

Pastor, Bolivar Drive Baptist Church, Bradford, Pennsylvania, August 1995-August 1997.

Pastor, Friendship Baptist Church, Langenselbold, Germany, November 1997-December 2002.

Pastor, Salem Baptist Church, Elizabeth City, North Carolina, July 2003- Present.