



Paul the Church Planter

Ed Stetzer says: "Through the ministry of the apostle Paul, the New Testament provides a great example of the way we can minister to unchurched persons."¹ What qualified Paul to be a church planter?²

- Paul was *personally prepared*
 - World-class formal education and training
 - Vital relationship with God (2 Cor 12.7-9)
 - Teachable (Acts 11.25-26)
 - Exemplary life (1 Thess 2)
- Paul was an *evangelist*
 - His preaching and evangelism started right after his conversion (Acts 9.19-20)
 - Led whole families to Christ; conducted large-group meetings (Acts 16.25-33, Acts 13.44)
 - Looked for the most receptive (Acts 18.6)
- Paul was an *creative and innovative* leader
 - Call and vision to reach the Gentiles
 - Risk taker: led missionary teams to new territories to plant churches
 - Selected workers and apprentices to be on his team.

¹Ed Stetzer, *Planting Missional Churches*, Nashville: B & H Academic, p 44.

²Stetzer, pp 45-48.

- Teammates had confidence in his decisions (Acts 16.6-10)
- Proactive strategist (Acts 13.14, 44-49)
- Deliberate planning (Acts 19.21)
- Paul was a *team player*
 - Willing to work with others on a team (Acts 13.1-5)
 - Always planted with a team (Acts 15.40, 16.6, 20.4)
 - Had a sending base to which he reported back (Acts 14.26-28)
- Paul was a flexible, *risk-taking pioneer* (1 Cor 9.19-21)
 - Constantly penetrated new territory
 - Targeted new group - the Gentiles
 - Pioneered new methods of ministry (Acts 13)
- Paul *cared for people*
 - Invested in people's lives
 - Encouraged and comforted others
 - Concerned with others' growth and development
- Paul *empowered* others
 - Empowered younger Christians (Acts 16.1-3)
 - Appointed leaders and elders early on (Acts 14.21-23)
 - Recognized own strengths and weaknesses and delegated to others according to their strengths (Titus 1.5)
- Paul *remained committed* despite extreme personal sacrifice
 - Persecution (Acts 14.19-20)
 - Thankful and positive attitude in spite of cruel and unfair treatment (Acts 16.25)
- Paul *did not cling to his successes* - he was willing to let go of his church plants, empower local leaders, and move on to plant more (Acts 16.40)
 - Never stayed any longer than three years (Ephesus)
 - Trusted in God's provision to keep the churches he had started
 - Willing to let his best teammates leave his team for the benefit of the overall vision of planting more churches (Acts 17.14)
 - Modeled the church at Antioch that was willing to let go of its top leaders (Acts 13.1-4)