



"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14

Urban CPM Forum Q & A

In February 2009 a meeting was held of several urban church planting practitioners from nine urban centers ranging in population from three million to twenty-five million. The selection criteria for these cities were that more than one hundred churches had been planted to at least the third generation. Prior to this meeting a request was sent to many urban practitioners asking them to submit questions related to their work. The following are the submitted questions with the replies given by those attending the Urban CPM Forum.



How do I get people committed and really involved in the midst of a busy urban lifestyle and schedule?

- Adjust my schedule to theirs – when they have time. Don't follow assumed boundaries to my time; be creative in scheduling my rest times so I am available on their schedule.
- Join in recreation with them, eat meals with them.
- When people get saved, God change their hearts and they change their life priorities
- Understand their schedule – assess their root cause for not getting involved
- Find out what they are doing with their time and help them with it
- Have they really bought in? Is it of value/interest to them? If not, challenge them more but don't wait on them – find those who will commit.



How do I find places to meet in the city – for churches and training?

- Meet in Believer's homes / apartments / living areas / workplaces
- Believer's find places creatively, use common places like rooftops, public places
- Don't own the problem or solve it for the local Believers
- Pray
- Ask locals, 'Where do you hang out and talk when you don't want people to listen?'
- Believers rent premises
- Hide in plain sight, find a way to meet in the open without a security risk
- Check my definition of church and what is really required for a meeting place



Where do I baptize in a city?

- Don't own this problem for the local Believers; let them be led of God to creatively find a solution.
- Develop a system for portable baptisteries (e.g. metal frame and tarp, inflatable swimming pool, etc.)
- Public swimming areas, public bathing areas





"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14

Urban CPM Forum Q & A



How do I get people committed when materialism pulls so strongly?

- Pray for them
- Change my own expectations – develop small steps to get them to where they are; e.g. 1 min bible study – 1 verse with 1 question (how does this apply to your life?), sms to them
- What can they commit to? Start there.
- Does what we are offering really meet a need?
- Scriptures – exhortations and encouragement
- Look for responsive people and leave the onus on them. Focus on those who are most responsive and committed while always leaving the door open for minimally committed to come around
- Give them some practical actions to get personally involved with people in physical or material need



How do I group people in the city when they have no significant relationships with others?

- Target groups of individuals rather than trying to group several individuals
- Don't try - The moment I try to group individuals, I take away their incentive to win their oikos (household, network of relationships)
- I can't get outsiders inside
- Enlist the help of local co-workers to help group (e.g. via local cultural discernment)
- Do one on one and help them reach their oikos with the Gospel – then disciple them as a group
- Realize that relationships in the city are different – usually along lines of work, school or interest (not usually neighbors). Follow those lines of relationships.





"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14

Urban CPM Forum Q & A



How do I do rapid leadership development without or with minimal false starts or failures?

- Build DNA of reaching oikos – build a spiritual father relationship
- There will be much failing (not becoming mature leaders on your schedule) – like 80%! Increase the rate of my failure by investing in many people.
- Don't start people out at a high level of leadership, continue to mentor them as they lead or take ownership of small things and then grow.
- False starts come from lack of vision.
- What do I consider leadership development? It should involve walking alongside and passing skills to them (and move to coaching to mentoring as one progresses)
- No such thing as rapid leadership development, only rapid multiplication. The actual development of leadership still takes time and concentrated effort.
- Just-in-time learning, through Model > Assist > Watch > Leave; walking through the progress of the leader one step at the time
- Immediate leadership development rather than rapid. Many can lead immediately at a level appropriate to them (e.g. Titus 1 overseer qualifications) and will mature as time goes by (e.g. 1 Tim 3 overseer qualifications)
- Need continual encouragement – cultural differences of people's view about leadership
- Utilize and develop their spiritual gifts
- Formalize training in some form of frequency to guard against degeneration
- There is no leadership in a vacuum – maintain frequent meaningful contact.



How do I work with city people who tend to be transient?

- Train them for their next location – recognize the benefit to the Kingdom even if it doesn't seem to immediately benefit my city.
- Connect them with longer term people for the purpose of building significant relationships and potentially keeping them longer.
- Challenge them to stay for a period of time for Kingdom purposes.
- The individuals may be transient but the population isn't – get a critical mass going; continued emphasis, multiple starts, multiple streams will over time be sustained by the population base.
- Re-examine my paradigm of church permanence and what models I accept as valid or beneficial. People being transient does not mean the kingdom decreases, but rather morphs / spreads.
- See them as avenues into other groups / locations.
- Give them tools and process that can travel with them.





"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14

Urban CPM Forum Q & A

- Win their gatekeepers (e.g. factory owners) so as to have access for the constantly arriving newcomers.



There are many voices in a city. How do I keep a pure DNA?

- Know my goal/vision well. Don't deviate from the non-negotiables.
- Check my expectations – Does pure DNA translate into inflexibility?
- Relationship is key.
- Perseverance in my area.
- Be prepared to accept the consequences of sticking with my vision.
- Be transparent about other influences that will come in – talk with our people about this.



- Know what our non-negotiables are and communicate this - be careful not to compromise them just to keep people around us. – Stay on our course
- Don't curse people who leave
- Maintain a focus on multiple streams so that there is always forward progress even when some individuals or groups are pulled away.
- Teach the Scripture and train them well to evaluate new ideas based on Scripture alone.
- Recognize that there are other paths that are still Kingdom paths.



In my city, there are few or no believers, how do I start?

- Use national short term evangelism teams (or near culture teams)
- Abundantly share the Gospel – it is the power of salvation!
- Make lots of friends with non-Christians
- Look for large scale filtering options and build connections, *e.g. volunteers*
- A season of prayer – 6 months, bring in near culture workers and scatter them to the areas, and find Persons of Peace within 10 days to then hand over to local workers
- Set a goal and *push* to evangelize and find existing Believers over an intense period of time, 10 days, 30 days, etc. These are times when you pour more time and effort into finding persons of peace than at other times.
- Are there really no Christians in my area? Reevaluate.





"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14

Urban CPM Forum Q & A



How do I find a POP (person of peace)? In practical ways, how do I know someone is a POP?

- Pray for God to show me a Person of Peace, enlist others to pray for this with me.
- Ask people I know to introduce me to their friends (expand my relationships).
- Look for people who are approaching me for other reasons (e.g. street vendor).
- Live out a testimony and allow people to ask me questions.
- If I live the right kind of life conspicuously, I will often draw Persons of Peace to me.
- Consistently ask people spiritual questions that will help determine if they have spiritual interest.
- Look for any religious/spiritual indicator (like jewelry) and ask them about it to gain access for conversation



- Engage everyone I meet or know in conversation. Think about people I regularly come in contact with such as taxi drivers, grocery store clerks, vendors, waiters/waitresses, teachers, etc.
- Stroll in parks and talk to people
- Distribute Gospel tracts
- Find what they want to know about me and use that as segue into the Gospel.
- Be interested in other's life – ask them about what they do
- Matt 10 and Luke 10 – worthy and POP – this person (with influence and open) will be the one who will accelerate the work far and wide



How do I reach both outsider and insider in a city (locals and migrants)?

- I should follow the momentum of the Gospel and look for ways that it can branch out or bridge over into new networks of relationships.
- Start different streams (different churches) - each with a focus on reaching the different groups.
- Find different kinds of Persons of Peace.
- Using different strategies, e.g. geographical approach and then also intentionally reaching out to every different socio-economic level.
- Work where the Holy Spirit is working.
- Broad seed sowing that will impact both groups of the population.
- Be proactive and intentionally target segments.
- Find local partners who are reaching both segments.





"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14

Urban CPM Forum Q & A



How do you deal with the lack of male leadership?

- Find evangelistic strategies to target males (e.g. sports or male oriented activities).
- Help local Believing women solve this.
- Find the husbands of Believing women who are willing for discipleship and regular mentoring from me.
- Get more men involved in doing evangelism. Men will reach more men.
- Target heads of households.



How do you deal with women over involved in church and giving bad testimony (e.g. abandoning their family)?

- Ask the women to not spend as much time in ministry related activities. Ask them to go home.
- Address any wrong views of Biblical roles which are held by the local Believers.
- Pray for the husbands of Believing women.
- Do Bible studies on the qualification of elders and the role of wives.



What opposition do I face in a city how do I handle it?

- Religious oppositions related to landlords – landlords refusing to rent to Christians for meetings. In this instance we pray for new locations, keep meeting wherever we can find a place to meet.
- Live good lives – testimony is the key to combat opposition.
- Some opposition in the city comes from the plurality of Christian groups, Christian vs. Christian. We have to pray for peace among Believers and keep moving forward with the tasks that God has given to us.
- Don't let the 'right' know what the 'left' is doing – work independently and separately with each group.
- If differing groups meet, ask them about their vision and they will see the common ground.
- Build strong relationship with each group.
- Spiritual Battle – moral issues, sins – work alongside with them in counseling.
- Government opposition is common, especially as the churches or movement builds more momentum and becomes more obvious.





"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14

Urban CPM Forum Q & A



How do I work with existing established, traditional, evangelical churches?

How do I cast a vision to them? How do I promote a small HC model among a standard of larger groups? How do I help them transition to a new model?



- Love and respect them
- +1 principle, take one positive step in the right direction at a time – don't try to hit a homerun at the beginning.
- Ask them what their vision and burden and facilitate those parts that lead to CPM
- Depends on how much time and other options I have – need to assess if it's worth it. Many times it is simply more productive to move forward without those established groups or traditional churches that are not already prepared to change.
- Offer trainings to them e.g. evangelism and leadership that assist them in their ministry