

## FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED

### Part 3 of 3

by Ken Behnken

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I coined the phrase “apostolic entrepreneurs” because many characteristics of business entrepreneurs are also found in those who plant churches. The early apostles were certainly entrepreneurial as they traveled the world to start new churches from “scratch,” with nothing more than the precious Gospel message and the power of the Holy Spirit. This article concludes our series of three articles looking at the characteristics of entrepreneurs shared by Suzanne Mulvell in “Fear Factors,” from the April 25 issue of *Entrepreneur* magazine. Here we will name her final seven characteristics and see how they apply to our challenges in church planting.

- 18. Do what you love:** One of the greatest motivations in any job is to love what you do. When God called you to serve Him, He built into you an inner desire to be in ministry with Him. If our motivation is just money, prestige, or self aggrandizement, the tasks soon get old and we are headed for burn out. There are many ways to serve the Lord in his ministry. Take time to be in prayer, discover your gifts, your core values, your vision, and that which makes you happy. If sharing the Gospel with the lost excites you, if developing new relationships makes your blood stir, if training new people to serve and be leaders in the Kingdom of God motivates you, and if starting something brand new is irresistible, then church planting will be your love.
- 19. Spend time in nature:** We all need to get away from the stress and grind of everyday challenges. God has given us the beauty of His creation to enjoy. Take a relaxing walk through the woods or on the beach. Work in the garden or mow the grass. Spend time in God’s nature, talking with and listening to Him in prayer. Natural environments offer clarity and peace and can be especially nurturing during times of transition, change, and challenge.
- 20. Start small:** The great redwood started with a little seed. Don’t think that you have to start with a “bang.” God uses the little things and the small people to accomplish His vision. Every new mission starts with the first convert, the first family, the first small group. Have a “big vision” but get there one step at a time. A new church can be started with no money, no property, no office, and no computer. All you need is people, the Word of God and patience to wait on God. The book of Acts is full of small churches with big visions.
- 21. Expect resistance:** You will experience resistance both from within and from without. At times you will want to throw in the towel because of fear of failure or lack of confidence. You will question your ability and even your call. There will always be those who won’t agree with you and perhaps become so disagreeable that they will work to destroy everything you have started. The greatest resistance for any ministry is Satan himself. He does not want you in ministry. He fears your gifts and talents. He will do all he can to defeat you either from within or from without. These are the times to remember that this is not your ministry; it is the Lord’s. As you step out to share His Gospel, you have His promise, “I will be with you to the end of the age.” (Mt. 28:20) These words defeat Satan and overcome our fears and resistance. Even in the midst of the strongest resistance, you can step forward and say with Job, “Lord, I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted” (Job 42:2) and with Paul, “I can do all things through Christ who gives me the strength.” (Phil 4:13)
- 22. Practice Patience:** The writer of Ecclesiastes reminds us: “Patience is better than pride.” (Eccl. 7:8) Paul lists patience as one of the spiritual gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit. It is so easy to get impatient. When we try to do things in our time rather than God’s time, it can become disastrous. Our patience wears thin and we are quick to blame everyone but ourselves. Take time to

practice patience. When sitting in traffic or standing in line, use that time to be in prayer, to plan or to think positive thoughts. God uses waiting periods to help us grow. Place your frustrations in God's hands and wait on His time. It will surely relieve stress and develop patience.

- 23. Overcome the “not good enough” syndrome:** How often have you missed opportunities because you thought you weren't capable of doing something? The only way to learn is to step out and do it. Many witnessing opportunities are missed because we feel inadequate. Tasks are not completed because we don't feel we can do them “good enough.” We get “good” at something by doing it, by practicing it. Jesus said, “With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.” (Mat. 19:36) Perhaps we can't do it by ourselves, but the apostolic entrepreneur in us says, “With God's help, I am going to give it a try!”
- 24. Ask for help:** Pride goes before the fall. How often don't we feel that if it is going to get done right, we have to do it ourselves? A good entrepreneur gathers around him a team that has talents, gifts, and training he doesn't have. A good mission planter gathers a team that can provide leadership in areas of his weakness. On his mission trips, the Apostle Paul took one or more helpers. He was not afraid to ask for help and to use the gifts and talents of others. The church, the body of Christ, is made up of many members having different gifts and able to accomplish different things in the Kingdom. A healthy church is a body using all of its parts to accomplish ministry. A good leader, entrepreneur, pastor, mission planter, asks for help. Above all, be on your knees asking God for help.
- 25. Trust your instincts:** No one knows you better than yourself. Others may say you're crazy for starting this ministry or that you are doing it all wrong. If you have done your homework, been in prayer, empowered by the Word, guided by a coach or mentor, then move ahead. Check your instincts with your coach or mentor. You will find the more you act on your instincts, the more instinctive you will become. Let God empower your instincts, guide your thoughts, and motivate your actions. If you are called and led by the Lord, be ready to move as he moves. He will be guiding your instincts. ■

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