

# **The Church Planting/Evangelistic Association**

The Non-Profit 501-c3 organization for career ... Church Planters

By: Ron F. Hale



The Church Planting Evangelistic Association could serve as:

- A new joint-venture vehicle for accelerating the work of planting Great Commission congregations.
- Allow gifted men to choose Church Planting as a ...career!
- A historical precedence for this funding vehicle already exists in SBC life. It has been used by vocational Evangelists
- The method of funding has the possibility of increasing funds instead of decreasing funds
- The method would clearly not be for all church planters!
- This method could be portable. A gifted planter could move across country with most of his funding in place in order to provide for his family
- This method could meet the personality profile of some very gifted and proven men that will not fit into the existing missions systems of SBC life



**The Core Idea** is working/partnering with gifted Church Planters who set up their own ... Church Planting/Evangelistic Associations 501 c (3). Full-time vocational Evangelists have had a self-funding method in place for many years in our convention. Historically, they have set up non-profit Evangelistic Associations with a board of directors and interested supporters. Their evangelistic efforts and effectiveness in revivals and crusades helped capture the heartbeat of Christian friends, family members, and friendly churches in lending both prayer and financial support to the evangelist and his family. Please understand ... this idea is not focused on using vocational evangelists in Church Planting (although some could do the job very well if challenged) but using their proven support structure for the purpose of planting new congregations throughout the world.

## **This funding method could possibly:**

1. Have the potential for increased annual financial support through the “planting years” of a Church Planter instead of decreasing funds in our present structure. Through his board of directors, friends, family, and friendly churches – the majority of the support could be raised.
2. Transferable – this method could be ideal for Planters who have a successful new work and wish to move to a new area for a new church planting challenge. He would not have to start over at ... zero. Also, some men are better suited for starting and growing a church through stage one or two then should move on to dig another new work out of the dirt.
3. Morale – many hard-driving, high-energy (some with age and experience on their side) just can not fit into our traditional Mission Pastor model that receives his monthly supplement, sends in his monthly report, goes to required meetings, and takes what the “name only sponsoring church” dishes out to him. It would be quite different being the President of your own Church Planting Evangelistic Association that God has called you to establish for the most important task in His kingdom ... verses ... the feeling of being the peon at the bottom of our present missions pyramid. Let’s face it, Church Planters and Mission Pastors have the hardest job to do and they are:
  - The lowest paid
  - Receive the fewest/least benefits (perks)



- Can rarely take advantage of things like ... Missions week at Ridgecrest or Glorieta. Why? Because the guys that need things like this most are at the bottom of our missions “food chain”.
  - At times are given difficult timelines ... like planting a self-supporting church in very hard new work areas of our nation in 2-3 years.
  - Usually are blamed for “the failure” instead of seeing it as a “systems problem” that has led to the failure of the new work.
2. *We are not ... attracting the brightest and best possible potential church planters in SBC life because many of them will not ... submit their families to the poverty and Peon status of being a ... Mission Pastor.*
  3. As a new work leader, I have struggled with the “funding” issue for Church Planters in SBC life. I continually think and feel that a better method or methods can be found to be more effective (One size does not fit all). This idea that I am proposing is just one idea. Many new work leaders have seen how some of our traditional methods of funding have actually been a part of the problem instead of the solution. Such as:
    - Declining Funding Schedules – that pulls the family financial net out from under the Planter and his family after two or three years, while trying to plant a church in hard to reach areas. This leads to many church planters pre-maturely leaving their target area or target people group in search of greener ministry pastures as their “time” runs out. Many planters use their “last year energies” finding a new place to go because he sees and fears that the “end is coming”. The financial “pull-out” or “cut-off” becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure in the lives of some planters.
    - Many Mission congregations slowly accept the idea that other Mission entities are responsible for their pastor since outside monthly monies are “tied” to the pastor and not the church or project. Therefore, at the end of the established church planting time-line, the planter has a feeling of being abandoned by everyone. Many new converts either do not understand the dynamics of their pastor’s support structure or have not grown quickly enough in the area of tithing in order to suddenly provide full support. For the planter it leads to bitterness, disillusionment, and ministry fall-out. For the mission congregation it leads to continued dependence on outside funds, distrust of denominational types, feelings of failure, and at times a feeling of being stuck with a building payment but no funds to pay a preacher.

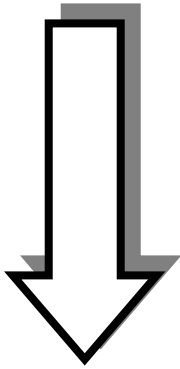
## Personal Bias Revealed

As a New Work Strategist, may I share several “gut feelings” and observations from my personal missional mental grid system?

1. Church Planting is the best method under heaven in evangelizing the lost and congregationalizing new converts. History has proven this out to be true!

Networking through:

- Board of Directors & partners
- Family
- Friends
- Friendly churches



- Association; Sponsoring Church
2. Cooperating Partners (listed above) could add their financial resources to the Church Planting project in their state or association
  3. Team Approach – gifted teams could be raised up Planters and they could raise support through their channels.
  4. Assessment, Approval, Appointment ... could be a part of these agreements.
  5. Cooperative Program Giving? A Church Planter would agree to never ask a SBC church to lower their CP giving or special missions giving in order to give to their CPEA. Through our informal SBC grapevine ... we would know “who” did this.
  6. Field-testing could be conducted.

**What about Control?  
Cooperation?  
Accountability?**

Southern Baptist mission work is about cooperation not control. If control or the question of “who gets the glory” is the bottom line, then this method will not work nor should it be tried. If cooperation is the bottom line, then this method has a possibility of being presented as an authentic method of cooperation in SBC life.  
*How could it work?*

1. Cooperating agreements could be established by the Church Planter and his Church Planting Association with any of the following entities:  
North American Mission Board; State Convention;

I have written this paper in the spirit of wanting to be part of the solution instead of being part of the problem. I would be open to your ideas, comments, constructive criticisms, and ways to innovate this idea or other ideas to plant Great Commission Congregations in America and around the world.

Ron wrote this paper while serving as Director of Missions in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Ron now serves in Illinois as the State Evangelism Director & Associate Manager of the Evangelism/New Work Team.

E-mail address: [ronhale@ibsa.org](mailto:ronhale@ibsa.org)

Ron Hale  
Illinois Baptist State Association  
P.O. Box 19427  
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9247