# Preface: Calvary Church Planting Manual (How it Works)

Please remember that although the manual is intended to be a practical “how to” resource it cannot replace the work of the Holy Spirit and the priority of loving God and others (Matt.22:37-39). Effective church planting is foremost the work of God’s Spirit and the byproduct of healthy relationships with God and others not a methodology.

## How the Training Program Works: A Snapshot

## What’s Expected of the Mentor

* Read all the material in this manual and be familiar with it.
* For at least a year, give at least two hours a week to your church planters.
* Make sure your church planters are getting teaching opportunities
* Preparing, scheduling, overseeing, and evaluating special ministry projects for the church planters. These will be assigned every month or two.
* Communication to the congregation about the program before, during, and after.
* Work through the "lifework" questions in each section with your church planters.
* Share your own stories with those you mentor.

## What the Church Planting Student Should Expect

* Recommended prerequisite: completion of some kind of Bible college or school of ministry program.
* Weekly meetings with mentor for a year.
* Commitment to teacher training (this and the weekly mentoring should take about two hours a week).
* Volunteer for church ministry work apart from weekend services, for at least a year. Prior staff experience may make this less necessary or unnecessary.
* Possible intern program as detailed in appendix.
* Special ministry projects prepared, scheduled, overseen, and evaluated by the program leaders. These will be assigned every month or two
* Reading books listed in the bibliography.
* Work through the "lifework" questions for each section with your mentor

## How the Training Program Works: An Overview

**1. The materials are designed for mentor-disciple training:** As an ideal, a lead pastor who has had experience as an effective church planter can train an individual or small group of potential church planters.

**a. The mentor should know the material:** The mentor should review the entire manual, including the appendix, and be prepared to discuss with potential planters. Plan to include your own anecdotal experiences to illustrate principles and fit the discussion to your context and culture.

**2. Duration:** How long should it take to teach through the manual materials? Although you could read the materials relatively quickly, mentoring is a process. I recommend that you take a year to review the lessons. Even though you can accelerate the process to take less time avoid the temptation to minimize this training to less than six months … remember mentoring is a process that takes time.

**a. Frequency:** Meet on a weekly basis for about an hour with the potential church planter(s) and review a section or related sections consistent with the pace of your training schedule [e.g. six-month, a year, etc].

**3. Concurrent teacher training:** Our philosophy of ministry places a premium on Bible teaching. Therefore, any effective model of training church planters must include an intentional method of training Bible teachers and preachers. The appendix describes a model of weekly teacher training designed to take place concurrently with the planter training.

**a. Time:** The training manual lessons *and* teacher development will likely require 2 to 2.5 hours per week.

**4. Concurrent service in a healthy local church:** We encourage at least a year of service in a healthy local church prior to attempting to plant a church. The experience of part or full-time work interacting with other staff, volunteers, leading and caring for people, staff and leadership meetings, etc. is distinct from volunteering on weekends. Planters need to glean these experiences as part of the equipping process.

**a. Prior staff experience:** A prospective planter who has years of effective service on staff in a healthy local church needs less training and experience than a novice, especially if the experience was gleaned at a healthy “Calvary-type” church.

**b. Internship:** The appendix contains an internship program description and application form that can be used to design a program of service in the context of the mentor’s local church. Keep in mind that it is wise to expose the planter to a variety of ministry leaders and experiences during the process.

**5. Projects to prepare for church planting:** The appendix includes several exercises to be completed by potential planters and reviewed by their mentor. The mentor should review the exercises in the appendix prior to initiating training and schedule when they will be assigned in the process (e.g. every month, two months, etc.). The projects are practical and will also help the mentor to evaluate the likely effectiveness of the planter.

**6. Prerequisites:** The training will be more effective if the planter has completed a School of Ministry (SoM) or Bible college curriculum as a prerequisite to, or concurrent with, training as a church planter. It is best if potential planters have successfully completed a SoM or Bible college program *prior to* training as a church planter.

**7. Bibliography:** Leaders are learners, and generally in the context of successful church planting, leaders are readers. The appendix includes several books that were used as source material in preparing this manual and several books that are recommended reading. Obtain and read (or listen to) as many of the recommended books as possible – they will enrich you and your ministry.

**8. Gathering prospective planters:** Plan to communicate to the congregation, Bible College, and/or School of Ministry graduates, existing staff, and people you believe may be called to be church planters. Announce the vision for church planting and training about three to six months before the proposed start of training. Announce the vision frequently. You may want to include those who are considering going out with the planter as part of a core leadership team.

**9. Lifework:** Many of the sectionscontain a “lifework” assignment. These are discussion questions and/or work to be completed by a prospective planter and reviewed with their mentor to prepare for life – the Christian life and the life of a church planter.

**10. A Pastor’s Perspective:** Stories are a great way to transmit truth. Pastor Bruce Zachary, the author of this material, has included some of his experience as a means of communicating a principle more effectively. Pastor Bruce says, “I’m sensitive to the fact that this manual will be used in many cultures, and my illustration or anecdote may not be effective in a particular setting.” Mentors should be prepared to share their own stories.