

It (could have) Happened Like This...

July/August 2018

Diary of a Church Planter

[The following is historical fiction. It didn't happen but...]

May 13 – I never thought I would see this day. I can hardly believe it has arrived. It seems so long ago that I sensed God had called me to ministry. My wife agreed but I don't think she knew what she was getting into. Our children had no clue. Seven years of on-line courses and weekend classrooms. Many were the nights I was up late trying to meet those assignment deadlines. Graduation brought a joyous end.

Application to the Bible Fellowship Church followed. I thought everything would be easy after all those papers. The application was a snap. The open book test was not so bad. But, that exam on the Articles of Faith was something else. They insisted that I memorize every article. Then I had to meet with that committee. For two hours, they grilled me and asked questions. But, I got through it and now they tell me I can serve in a Bible Fellowship Church.

July 7 – I talked with one of the BFC churches today. It is strange but I do not sense God is drawing me to them. I think I should look into becoming a church planter. Somehow I am drawn to that. I have always been one for adventure. I know that is not a good reason to take up a ministry but I feel a tug. It sounds like something I would like to do – move into a new community where there are people who need to know about Jesus. The thought really lights a fire in me. I just don't think I would be content to be a pastor in a traditional church. I know churches need pastors but it doesn't feel like a fit for me.

I think I would be more secure if I were to go to a church with a building and a budget. My family thinks so. Some of my friends tell me I am crazy but I really think it is what God wants me to do. What is your will, O Lord? I went through all this because I want to serve you. Guide me.

November 22 – Where did I go wrong? I was so sure about it. I was willing to quit my job after 14 years. God gave me a heart for church planting. I was told that I would need to raise my salary. I was supposed to ask my family and friends to support me. And then I was to meet with the missions committee at my church. I had to ask other churches too. It is all so embarrassing to me. I feel like I am a beggar. I don't like it one bit. I thought after the assessing process and acceptance by the Board of Church Extension everything would fall into line. Some have determined to give money for me and to pray for me. But not enough yet. Why should it take so long? Was I wrong? I still have to go to work. All of



this contacting people while keeping my regular job leaves me exhausted. Did I miss something?

February 4 – The rental truck has been returned. It is done. The new house is adequate but not quite like our home. Mary is okay with it even though it is not like our old neighborhood. The girls are complaining they have no friends here. But we just got here. This town only has one church on the east side. After doing a demographic of the community, the Board of Church Extension accepted the proposal that we begin to plant a church here. Three other families in the area have agreed to be a part of what we are attempting to do. We are praying because it all looks so hopeless. If God does not do something, nothing is going to happen. I guess this is what it means to start from scratch.

I still don't have enough income for my support but I agreed to take a part time job. Fortunately they offer health insurance even for part timers like me. Mary says we won't be able to pay our bills and will never have time for each other. Perhaps others will help to support us and I will be able to give full time and energy to the work of church planting while taking care of my family. We are committed to trusting God for what we need.

June 15 – Wow! Today, a man I met at the coffee shop actually prayed with me to surrender to Jesus. I have been hanging out at the shop for the last couple of months. About the end of April, he and I began talking. And our little band started praying for him. Since we almost always were at the shop at the same time, our conversations continued. Then one day he asked me what I did for a living. I told him about my part time job. He asked why I had moved there. I thought when I told him I was there to start a church he would walk away. But he did not. He began asking questions. I did my best to answer them. I encouraged him to read the Bible and he did. Then he asked what it meant to trust Jesus and how he could do it. I could hardly believe it. He and I prayed right there in the shop. That's what I'm talking about.

- Dick Taylor

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