

# Community Church Planting



Disciples multiplying disciples  
Pastors multiplying pastors  
Churches multiplying churches

A program of C4J

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A catalytic Community Church Planting program initiated through  
2 Timothy 2:2 training projects

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Pastors multiply pastors  
Churches multiplying churches

Compiled by Bruce Bennett

Bruce is the founder of C4J (Communities for Jesus), he also pioneered the Village Church Planting model that facilitated the planting of 9500 churches between 2003 and 2010. Dee, his wife, has been the inspiration behind designing this community church planting program

For further particulars, please write to:  
Bruce Bennett  
Email: [BruceGeoffreyBennett@gmail.com](mailto:BruceGeoffreyBennett@gmail.com)  
Erich Rupprecht  
Email: [erupprecht@gmail.com](mailto:erupprecht@gmail.com)

*“...upon this rock I will build my church...” the Lord Jesus Christ*

## Acronyms

C4J	– Communities for Jesus
CCP	– Community Church Planting
TCP	– Training Centre Church Planting
CB-CP	– Church-Based Church Planting
DCP	– Disciple Church Planting
SCP	– Seminary Church Planting
VCP	– Village Church Planting
OMS (SA)	– One Mission Society (South Africa)

## 9.5 Encouragement

**9.5.1.** God uses believers to strengthen and impart spiritual gifts into the lives of others. “I long to see you so that I may **impart** to you some spiritual gift to make you strong--that is, that you and I may be **mutually** encouraged by each other's faith.” (Rom 1:11-13) Our faith enables us to learn from each other; mutuality speaks of learning together; giving to and receiving from each other. The practice of encouragement strengthens us. The Greek verb for encouragement is *protrepo* meaning *to urge forward*.

“Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in **the way of the Lord**, and he spoke with great fervour and taught about Jesus accurately, though

he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, **they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.** When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers **encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him.** On arriving, **he was a great help** to those who by grace had believed. For **he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate,** proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.” (Acts 18:24-28)

**9.5.2. Encouragement is an essential ingredient to healthy communities of church planters.** Early Christians were referred to as people of the way and instructed in the way of the Lord or the way of God. The implication of the phrase *the way of* is that the belief of Christians affects their way of life. Belief and practice were inseparable. You believed in hospitality, and you practiced hospitality. You believed in the transforming power of encouragement, therefore you practiced encouragement, and therefore, the community was open to transformation. Protrepo is to urge and persuade people to move deeper into their faith. The belief of Christians led them to be *people of the way* who practiced the *way of the Lord.*

**9.5.3. Our faith is both the source and object of encouragement.** Your faith stirs our faith. Your faith produces encouragement, igniting the faith of your community -- persuading and strengthening their walk in the way of the Lord. Your faith is the means and method for encouraging and strengthening others. The results of your encouragement in me, is that my faith is increased. And the reward for your encouragement being poured into my life is that my increased faith can now be of benefit to you as I in turn release encouragement into your spirit. We are now mutually encouraging each other.

*The belief of Christians led them to be people of the way who practiced the way of the Lord.*

**9.5.4. The Holy Spirit is our Chief Encourager.** The Greek noun for encouragement is paraklesis, *para*, plus *kaleo*. *Para* means *by the side* and *kaleo*, *to call*. Paraklesis or encouragement means *a calling to ones aid or side*. Parakletos is the Greek noun for encouragement, a word used in a court of justice denoting a legal assistant, or a counsel of defence – an advocate who pleads someone’s case. In 1 John, 2:1 Jesus is referred to as the paraclete, our advocate. “My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.” In John 14:15-17 paraclete is translated as counsellor to refer to the Holy Spirit, “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever-- the Spirit of truth.”

**9.5.5. Our role of encouragement is inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit.** Spirit-filled Christians are to be advocates for each other; God instructs us to aid each other in our walk of faith. The presence of *Christ in you*, or the Holy Spirit upon you, is the Paraclete in you, and is the source and power for you to become an aid or an assistant to others, in their walk of faith.

*The Paraclete in you, the source, and power for you to become an aid or an assistant to others, in their walk of faith*

**9.5.6. Encouragement is a distinct spiritual gift.** Romans 12:6-8 says some are uniquely equipped to exhort and encourage others, “We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith... if it is encouraging, let him encourage... let him do it cheerfully.” There is a spiritual gift of encouragement, and so this practice comes more naturally to those who are gifted and flow in the Spirit.

**9.5.7. Encouragement strengthens both recipient and giver.** “So when we could stand it no longer, we thought it best to be left by ourselves in Athens. We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them. In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know. For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way, the tempter might have tempted you and our efforts might have been useless. But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you. Therefore, brothers, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith. For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord.” (1 Th 3:1-8)

In time of trial and persecution, Paul sent Timothy to strengthen and encourage the Thessalonians, a young church, in their faith. Timothy returns and brings good news about their faith, which in turn leads to their encouragement. Faith is the source for encouragement, which we give to others, and in doing so produces encouragement in the heart of the giver. The giver's faith increases in the act of encouraging others. The antidote for our own discouragement is to encourage someone else. We dispel discouragement in and through the act of godly encouragement. Paul sent encouragement to others – Timothy returned with encouragement for Paul in his distress. Encouragement heals both the recipient and the giver.

**9.5.8. Encouragement facilitates harmonious community life.** Paul says, “And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, and be patient with everyone.” (1 Th 5:14) Encouragement is God's antidote for the deception of sin. When sin reigns in the church, when backsliders are in abundance, there will be a noted absence of encouragement. Encouragement is the oil that drives the motor of the Christian church. Without oil in a motor metal rubs against metal, constant friction produces heat that seizes the motor. Take out encouragement from Church life, believers will rub against believers, friction will abound, and church life will rapidly deteriorate. Encouragement is the oil of church life – of which we can never have too much.

**9.5.9. Encouragement is a command given to all believers.** Whilst there is a spiritual gift of encouragement, nevertheless there is a universal call to all believers to practice encouragement. All believers must deliberately consider how they may spur one another on in their faith adventures. “Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and

good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (He 10:23-25) We are to be intentional and “consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” Encouragement spurs us to remain close to the heart of God. We are to exhort others to appropriate and enjoy the full benefits of our Christian life. We have access into the very presence of God, a right to experience and dwell perpetually in His presence. God calls us to come out from unbelief, to put aside the sin of lethargy, and live in the fellowship and favour of almighty God. Let us be deliberate and thoughtful and spur one another on into the love of the Father. We are to call people to rid themselves of lethargy, luke-warmness, and half-heartedness; this is a call to stop living in the outer court of the tabernacle and enter through the veil of Christ into the Holy of Holies. God calls us to extend this remarkable invitation to others, allowing them to enjoy the benefits of the High Priest, living and walking continuously in the presence of God, enjoying our complete and perfect salvation. Encouragement leads the way! Christ’s death has torn apart the veil, the Holy of Holies is open, and the Father longs for us to enter into His unmediated presence. We all need encouragement!

**9.5.10. Encouragement is a continuous activity woven into the very fabric of Christian practice.** “See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.” (He 3:12, 13) Each day we have an invitation to enjoy a fresh anointing from the Father, the power, presence and provision of God. Discouragement can break a good man. Encouragement can take the mediocre and transform it into a thing of startling beauty. An average church with a healthy dose of encouragement will lift a church into a great church. All Christians, children of faith, have the potential to transform the lives of others. The world is waiting and watching to see what you can still do. Your gift of encouragement is sorely needed in the lives around you. Give away encouragement and church planters will mobilise a vast army in the cause of unreached people. Courage and support will replace fear and scepticism, and hope and faith will return in abundance. Give encouragement to others, and you will soar on the wings of angels as you plant multitudes of new churches. The world needs your gift of encouragement.

Mahatma Gandhi said, “You Christians have in your keeping a document with enough dynamite in it to blow the whole of civilization to bits, to turn society upside down, to bring peace to this war-torn world. But you read it as if it were just good literature, and nothing else.”

