

## Picturing Yourself as a Modern Day “Paul”

If you were a modern day “Paul,” and had no financial resources, and like Paul, you had to work only with God, prayer, and your relationships with other deeply committed Christ-followers, and you had to multiply churches that thrive without any money for buildings and with little or no money for pastors...

....Then what could you still teach your “Timothys” about growing disciples/planting churches that exhibit the following basic practices in their life together:

1. Persons experience loving acceptance when they participate for the very first time...they are valued and fully included, never manipulated, put into a system, or given a superficial “welcome”.
2. They practice “radical generosity” in their giving...perhaps even giving everything away each month and allowing members to deliver the cash, checks, food, clothes, school supplies, Bibles, toiletries, shoes, etc. to the recipients.
3. They practice “authentic hospitality” toward persons in the community who show no interest in the church or spiritual things...they are still treated with genuine Christ-like respect.
4. They are led by spiritually sound volunteer servant-leaders who earn a living and provide for their families completely through a fulltime “Tentmaking” vocation. What kind of jobs could they get that would provide for their families, and still give them time for ministry?
5. They gather in homes, apartments, parks, cafes, breakrooms, gazebos, community rooms, and even host church buildings that allow them to use their facilities at no cost...any place that is reasonably comfortable, available, and free. What locations might groups gather weekly that cost no money?
6. They baptize in pools, rivers, lakes, metal tanks, and other churches baptisteries– Where else could they baptize? Where did early Christians baptize?
7. They Worship with guitars, keyboards, CDs, Scripture, nature, and sharing where they have seen God at work during the week.– What are other simple but sincere ways they could worship?
8. They practice Discipleship that is more “obedience-based” than “knowledge-accumulated” using group Bible discussion, leader-led Bible dialogue, or sermons in which persons are encouraged to ask questions and make comments. Discipleship is as much caught as taught.
9. They do hands-on Ministry of all varieties....serving the needs of the hungry, sick, orphans, widows, strangers, powerless persons around them, as well as church planting, and world mission initiatives.
10. They are encouraged to share their faith-journey to Christ and with Christ with people in the church, their home, in friendships, and with those who are in their sphere of relationships?
11. They truly support each other and stand by one another in all of life...they face life together without masks and know they are free to share victories and struggles in their lives.
12. They train new leaders much like Paul did...in relationship and in the process of serving others....accountability is to the Holy Spirit first, their “Paul type-mentor” second, and the group they lead third.