

SEED PLANTERS MEXICO

Planting the Seed...Finding the Good Ground, Mat. 13:8

The ABC's of Mission Partnerships

I cannot wait to get to my mission field. But it is critical to build a biblical foundation here, before I go on to my country of ministry. I would like to give you my very personal perspective on missions, as I see it biblically. When contacting churches and when talking to pastors, I want to make one aspect extremely clear. **I do not seek for financial support. I long for ministry partnership.** Let me explain. Money is important for our basic needs but ministry partnerships are essential for ministry success. I am looking for churches that have a strong desire to be involved in the missionary work, not only send money to missions. I am looking for churches that want to know what their missionaries are doing and how is their investment being managed.

For that reason, I have come up with simple yet important characteristics that I am seeking in my ministry partnerships. I have called them the **ABC's of mission partnerships.**

As a missionary, I am looking to be in partnerships with churches that are:

- **A**ssessing the missionary work
- **B**ecoming actively involved with the missionary work
- **C**hrist-envisioning missionary work

Assessing the Missionary Work

I want to partner with churches that are constantly assessing their missionaries. A church that evaluates their missionaries on a constant basis is a church that cares for missionaries and that are good stewards of the Lord's resources. I want to be part of that church's missions program! Recently I heard of a church that finally decided to stop supporting a missionary because they had not heard from him in ten years! What? Ten years with no contact whatsoever? I want to know that the church cares for the missionary and most importantly that they care for the work. Since the entire church cannot go to the field, then they send a representative and I am expecting that they will be carefully praying for his success and humbly evaluating his work.

One of my favorite times in the year is when companies release their earnings call. Because I have money invested in a few companies, I enjoy hearing what they have been doing with my money. What is it that they did right? What is it that they did wrong? What are they going to do about it? What are the expectations for future quarters based on past performances? How does this quarter compare to last year's quarter? And yes! Do I get a dividend? And if so, how much? See, as a stock holder I care about my investment, and appreciate the hard work of a company that is doing the best they can to bring the most profits possible.

In a similar way, I want to partner with churches that will be looking forward to hear the "earnings call". I want to partner with churches that are constantly assessing my performance in a biblical manner. I want to partner with churches that are concerned that their investment in being used as God intended it. Please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that churches should be looking over the shoulders of missionaries trying to find something wrong in their work.

I am not saying either that churches should have a quota of “souls saved” for the missionary. A mentality like that is foolish. What I am saying is that both the church and the missionary should be actively engaged in **assessment** and **evaluation**. The church will rejoice over the hard work of the missionary and the results of his efforts, and then pray over those areas in which he needs more help. The church will assist him as much as possible in those areas and provide as many tools for him in order to achieve biblical success. All those come only through careful **assessment**.

Becoming actively involved with the missionary work

I want to partner with churches that are seeking ways to stay connected with missionaries. I want to know that the church will make a sincere effort to send the pastor or a missions group to my country of ministry. I want to know that the church will promote short-term missions work. I want to partner with churches that will encourage young people to go to my country of work and help during the summer or other school breaks. I want to partner with churches that will be actively making an effort to keep our communication channels as open as possible. I want to partner with churches that will be in contact and will be wanting to hear about my ministry. I am not saying that the church needs to call me every day or that the church has to send everyone to help me every year. After all, the missionary is going to the country as a representative for that church. All I am saying is that the church should be willing to participate as much as possible with the missionary.

I understand that there are some churches that support hundreds of missionaries and keeping up with all the details in each country can become hard.

However, I am only seeking that there be an **effort to become involved** in my work, as little or as great as it may be. When I call churches I make sure to tell them that even if they have met up their missions budget, they can still become partners with me in other areas. I will benefit more from a church that is actively involved in my ministry, than from a church that just sends me a check every month. Please do not misunderstand me! I am not belittling financial support. I am stating that financial support and ministry involvement is of great benefit.

Christ-envisioning Missionary Work

I want to partner with churches that are big dreamers! I want to partner with churches that have long-term visions. I want to partner with churches that are always seeking for the “next big step”. I want to partner with churches that are never satisfied in the work of the Lord. I want to partner with churches that take God at His Word. I want to partner with churches that use their God-given talents to produce fruit, so that the fruit produces more fruit (John 15). I want to partner with churches that live in reality so they can plan for the future. I want to partner with churches that do not look at the potential so long that they end up stalling. I want to have those types of churches backing up my ministry. I want to have the pastors of those churches praying for me and envisioning with me the “next big thing”. For the sake of the Gospel and for the glory of God, I want to have a vision for my ministry and I want to find churches that have a vision of their own.

Josué Ortiz