

WHY I THINK G12 OR “THE MASTER'S PLAN” (AS WE CALL IT AT ANAHEIM FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE) IS WORKING SO WELL IN SO MANY PLACES AROUND THE WORLD

By Craig Wesley Rench

I have been pondering WHY G12 is so successful all over the world (there are successful G12 churches in every country on the planet and this particular model of discipling is now being used by the largest churches in at least 10-12 countries). What are the essential sociological, psychological, and spiritual “itches” that G12 seems to be “scratching”? Why are so many being drawn to this model? Why is God choosing to bless this principle and vision so much? Why is Dr. Cho of Korea so impressed with this model that he would say, “This is the model of discipling that will take the nations!” These are just a few early thoughts ... I hope to develop this further. At quick glance, this is what I am seeing in the G12 churches that I am looking at:

1. There is such a strong emphasis on personal purity and personal holiness. I believe that God honors and blesses this.
2. There is such a firm foundation on fervent prayer, fasting and passionate supplication. The Holy Spirit responds to this kind of melt-down praying that is foundational for true brokenness before God and desperateness in our hunger for God and His Presence and Holiness!
3. There is a “path” or methodology that is fairly easy to understand and follow... for growth, discipleship, and on-going accountability and mentoring. Part of Wesley’s genius was his methodology of small groups, bands, societies, etc. We all need a clear path to follow as we make disciples and turn them into discipling makers themselves. G12 gives us a clear path and in a church that is doing G12 it puts all of the discipling makers “on the same page” and “talking the same language”. This provides a fabulous synergy!
4. There is such a strong emphasis and intentionality about soul-winning and consolidating new believers.
5. It produces “fruit that remains” (John 15:16) This is thrilling and encouraging to faithful pastors and leaders who have labored so hard and faithfully for so long with such diminishing returns... note the sad retention rates we have mentioned before... and now, we have something that begins to truly bear fruit that lasts! How encouraging this is to tired, weary pastors who are discouraged and questioning their calls!
6. It puts new believers into “families” quickly, just as Wesley did with his small groups. Baby Christians desperately need this Christian fellowship and spiritual parenting. How would our physical babies fare if they were treated with the same disregard and distance that too often new baby Christians meet with in our typical North American Nazarene churches?
7. It fosters relationships... deep, long-lasting, life long relationships! We were built for these kinds of lasting, long term discipling relationships! This whole model is built on LONG TERM – “for life” -

deep relationships! Jesus committed Himself to His 12 for the rest of His earthly life and then on into eternity!

8. It raises up “Spiritual Fathers” who raise up “Spiritual Sons” who become “Spiritual Fathers” themselves rather quickly. This is such a great need in our “fatherless” culture! I see young men who have no dads, or absent dads, or abusive dads responding very intuitively, powerfully, and purposefully to this model! Demographic studies tell us that here in America 80% of African American children grow up with no father, male role model, or male mentor in their lives! Think of it! No wonder gangs appeal to so many fatherless youth! G12 gives us a godly model of young men and young women being lovingly mentored by “spiritual moms and dads”... I believe that this is going to be one of the most compelling and attractive points about the G12 church in the future. People are starving for godly parenting with a purpose!
9. We all need on-going coaching, discipling, mentoring, and modeling! G12 provides this! We all need a “team” to help us do the tough stuff of witnessing, soul-winning, discipling, and leading others. G12 puts us into teams that are getting after the very things that we want to do for Jesus... the very things He commanded us to. Difficult things are easier to do when we are surrounded by a team of people who are committed to the same vision and mission that we are giving our lives to! Imagine what it must be like to weekly meet for several hours with a team of brothers who are all highly motivated and committed to carrying out the Great Commission in their own personal mission fields! Iron will truly sharpen iron!
10. G12 simply can't happen without pastors mentoring other pastors... and I see this happening all over the world crossing denominational lines and cultural barriers. I see an unbelievable willingness of G12 pastors to do almost anything to help a brother pastor succeed in transitioning and applying this model. I think that our ABBA must smile when He sees this kind of selfless cooperation, humbleness and willingness to learn from each other and serve each other... all for the cause of reaching the lost and making disciples who will become disciplemakers!
11. I see G12 truly setting pastor's wives free to assume their Spirit-appointed and anointed roles as they begin to “co-pastor” with their husbands and really begin to lead and mentor the ladies of the church. Pastor's wives all over the world are becoming powerful “Deborahs” and “Priscillas” who minister alongside of their husbands and become mighty warriors in the faith.
12. There is a powerful “impartation” by the laying on of hands as Spiritual Leaders and Spiritual Fathers pray for their “sons” in the faith to have a “double portion” (see Elijah and Elisha) of whatever gifting, anointing, power, effectiveness in the Spirit, and fruitfulness. God seems to be delighted in answering this unselfish prayer and I am seeing pastors who are truly so excited about their disciples, their “men”, becoming greater and more effective for Jesus than even they are! I think that Jesus must have been thrilled to His very soul when He declared that His guys would do “even greater things” than He had done! This is a true Father's heart...when we long to see our children surpass us in power, holiness effectiveness, and fruitfulness, and we are willing to give our lives in sacrificial service to see that dream become reality! This is truly a fulfilling of the great prophecy of Malachi 4:5-6 - ...turning the hearts of the fathers back to the children.. I am so excited about spending the rest of my life serving my spiritual sons by washing their feet in intercession and encouragement and helping them to become mighty warriors for Jesus! What a glory and honor this is! I am so excited about this kind of long-term investing in serving my men!... Just like Jesus was with His 12...and His 72!.. and His 120!....and down to us!
13. The multiplication - once it gets beyond the 12 and 144 - becomes so geometric and explosive! It is truly phenomenal!

14. Maybe there is more to this business of the number “12” than most of us non-Charismatics would want to readily admit... maybe our Charismatic brothers are right --- that God has chosen to supernaturally bless those who commit to raise up 12 who will in turn raise up 12. If nothing else, it gives us something to shoot for and aim for.
15. The emphasis on the assumption and firm conviction that **every believer** can become a leader of a small group and become a disciplemaker, especially with on-going, “for life” mentoring and coaching. Children as young as 9 years of age are leading small groups of children!
16. The strong emphasis on goal-setting. This is nothing new for us Nazarenes, but the focus, intentionality, faith-focused praying and seriousness with which many G12 churches get after their goals is breath-taking. Maybe God really does honor this kind of bold, bodacious, prayerful faith-filled goal-setting!

One more thing struck me like never before about the Church of the Nazarene when I visited our explosive Cali, Columbia church in Dec. of 2005. It seems to me, (and of course, I could be wrong) that for our earliest decades as a denomination (and my great grandfather was a part of the crowd at Pilot Point, Texas!) that we truly wedded the great doctrine and experience of entire sanctification with the vision and mission of our Lord... but, along the way (in many of our churches at least) somehow the great doctrine and experience became divorced from the vision of the Father and the mission given to us by Jesus at the Great Commission. People would still get sanctified... but, there was no on-going mentoring in holiness and there was no practical application of getting directly and quickly involved in some systematic, methodical plan to accomplish the Great Commission. G12 - as I see Cali doing it and as we are beginning to see here in our earliest stages at Anaheim First - moves us back to this great connection. We have seen 40 people sanctified at our first 3 Encounter Retreats since July of 2005. That is being followed up by a year's worth of training, 2 hours a week, in practical holiness teaching and living. We are seeing people growing in their understanding of holiness and sanctification and they are seeing the connection between being sanctified and getting after the Father's Vision for His planet... (that is, a planet populated by sons and daughters that worship Him and serve the Lord Jesus Christ) and this is fulfilled by the Mission of making disciples of all the nations. So, I am seeing something thrilling and that is that my people (40 in our first wave of disciples-in-training) are sensing that they have to be sanctified and continuously filled by the Holy Spirit because of the Vision of the Father and the Mission of our Jesus that He has commissioned us to get after in earnest. So... we are connecting the doctrine of entire sanctification with the personal encounter and experience of truly being sanctified and immediately we are applying that to the Vision and the Mission of our God! Wow! This is thrilling. Now, we know WHY we have to be sanctified and walk in holiness! And, we are doing this in Community - small groups. As Wesley would say “There is no holiness... without social holiness!” and by that he meant small group accountability and commitment to each other's growth. This is incredibly exciting to me!

What an equation: The great doctrine of entire sanctification + a personal encounter with the Living God in our Encounter retreats where they are truly sanctified in reality + on-going training in practical holiness and disciplemaking + catching the Vision of the Father to redeem this dying world + the Mission given to us by Jesus – spelled out in a clear-cut, path and methodology that works! = Revival and Souls being won to Christ and consolidated and disciplined into DiscipleMakers who will never quit!

These are just some thoughts... I am sure more insights will become obvious to me as we continue on this exciting path of The Master's Plan!