



# RIVERS OF JOY MINISTRIES

**NEWSLETTER**  
**1 August 2014**

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Dear Pastor

Greetings in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. I thank God for your life and commitment to this ministry and above all to God's service. Here is my latest pastoral letter for you all. Please share it with your people. It is very important that your people can be blessed with these great teachings.

## **Special notices**

### **Pastoral letter**

As you will have noticed from last Pastoral letter this is a new format' all news and prayer requests are now being sent separate in a different email whilst this one concentrates on "pastoral issues" and teaching/encouragement. Please still send any news and prayer requests and they will be included in the other newsletter.

### **Bishop's travels**

Please note that due to the Ebola Virus outbreak my planned travels to West Africa, and specifically to Liberia and Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana and Ivory Coast, are suspended for the time being and new dates will be set as soon as the situation improves.

## **The Word of God**

### **Rewards for obedience**

Obedience, oh what a difficult word! For many of us obedience reminds us of when we were growing up and had to be obedient to our parents and our teachers at school. For many of us obedience is something we don't like and it is a real challenge for us. Our minds often questions us as to why we should "restrict" ourselves to observe certain rules or regulations and follow certain principles. Our inner nature is to be a rebel to anybody and anything that we see or perceive as to be a limit to our freedom.

Yet, according to Deut 28, dis-obedience is what not only stops us from receiving all that God has in store for us.but actually will bring curses upon us! Jesus once challenged the disciples about this. Jesus said that obedience is the sign of love. If we declare that we love Jesus then it must follow that we obey His commands. So obedience is the key to God's blessings and favour! You cannot expect God to bless you, to heal you, to provide for you, to surround you with peace and joy as long as you are disobedient to His word!

## **School of leadership**

### **7 Tips for Planting in a New Community**

Ron Edmondson shares seven tips for planting a church in a new environment.

I was recently asked for any suggestions I have for planting a church in a different community from where you currently live and know. There is a group of 25 plus people who are leaving the comforts of home in California and traveling to the state of Idaho to plant a church. I love that kind of faith.

If you don't know, Grace Community Church is in my hometown, so I am very familiar with our community, but I planted a church before this one in a city in which I didn't know anyone well, so I have some experience in this area. Still, as I thought about these suggestions, I really believe they are shared for any church plant (perhaps even any church.)

Of course, these are given assuming you have a clear calling as to where you are to plant, but here are some of my suggestions for planting a church in another community. There are probably hundreds of others, but these were the first 7 that came to my mind:

### **Learn the culture**

- Every city, every village, and every group of people have their own unique identity. What matter's most? What do they celebrate? Where do people live and play? What do they do for fun? What's their language? What are the traditions unique to this area? What history do they value?

### **Learn the market**

- Are schools an option for a building? Is the community in a growth mode or a declining mode? What are the major problems, concerns, and needs of the community? Who are the leading employers? What are the demographics?

### **Learn the competition**

- Before you get too excited...it's not other churches. It's anything that has the people's attention you are trying to reach besides a church.

### **Buy Into the Community**

- Immediately find ways to get personally involved in the community with volunteer investment. That could be through the Chamber of Commerce, schools, festivals, etc. Give back...believe it or not, that gets attention.

### **Have a prayer team**

- There should be a group of people praying for this community, the church plant, and the leaders on a daily basis. Who are those people?

### **Develop patience**

- It is harder than you think it will be. It just is. Church planting...really any ministry...takes a tremendous toll on you physically, mentally, and even spiritually.

### **Protect your family**

- Just as church plants are stressful on the planter, they are equally challenging for the planter's family. This may be especially true in a relocation, since much of their support system is being replaced. Protect your family by discipling your time and not losing them as your primary focus. As much as possible, involve them in the work so they understand its value and get to share in the rewards.

Church planting is tough, but like all actions of faith and obedience, God uses the sacrifices to reach hurting people and change their life for His glory.

God bless you all!

Bishop Alex Tana

General Overseer