

Be Fruitful and Multiply: Raising Spiritual Sons and Daughters

Perhaps the greatest need facing the church in Europe today is the need for more leaders. Quality leaders emerge rather than arrive. Training in a classroom context can be a significant component in the development of a leader. However, it is not enough on its own; something more relational is required. Can we learn from New Testament models of ministry development? Can we shape a culture where the multiplication of ministry occurs naturally?

Tuuli Platner is the daughter of missionaries and a third culture kid; living in two different continents by age 7 before her family settled in the UK long-term. Now she is all grown up and has the privilege of serving the local church within student ministry and God's wider church in her media and communications role at Relational Mission. Most recently, she has also stepped into a new adventure of living missionally in a diverse community in the heart of London.

Jon Beardon is a member of the Relational Mission core team, with responsibilities that include overseeing the team of directors responsible for governance, finance, and communications and directly supervising some of the Relational Mission churches in the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic (Pardubice), France (Lille), Serbia (Nis) and Nepal. Jon loves working with these local churches to strengthen them and foster unity between them overflowing into ownership of shared church planting mission. In the United Kingdom this takes the form of the 20/20 initiative – reaching 20 more places in the East of England over 20 years since the year 2020. In the south of Serbia, he is working with longstanding local partners to serve a movement of Roma churches through teaching and training. Jon is a local church elder based at Wellspring Family Church, Dereham, a church he planted in 2002. Jon has a secondary teaching qualification, he spent six months in Ghana as a missionary, and for nearly five years worked as a schools' evangelist in the United Kingdom, before focusing solely on local church ministry and mission since 2000. Jon has a BA in Theology from London School of Theology. He is married to Nicky and has four children. In his spare time he plays field hockey and likes to walk.

I. Vocabulary of Family

A. Not an organization or a business but a family Eph 2: 15-16, 19

1. Administrative and organisational ministry serves the family but doesn't define the family
2. 1 Timothy 5:9 – flows from family care not organisational programme

B. God as our Father – adoption as sons

1. Matt 6: 9-13 - Our Father Prayer
2. Romans 8:15 Abba
3. Galatians 4:6 Sons

“What is the highest privilege of the gospel? What is a Christian? The question can be answered in many ways, but the richest answer I know is that a Christian is one who has God as Father. If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God’s child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his while outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all. ...Adoption...is the highest privilege that the gospel offers; higher even than justification...To be right with God the Judge is a great thing, but to be loved and cared for by God the Father is greater.” (J.I. Packer – Knowing God, p200-201, 206)

C. Old Testament

1. Genesis 17:4
2. Proverbs 4:1
3. Genesis 49:1-4
4. Psalm 139

D. New Testament

1. Who we are and how we live - Matthew 5:45
2. Not many fathers - 1 Corinthians 4:15
3. Father and son - Philippians 2:22
4. My true child - 2 Timothy 1:2 / Titus 1:4 / 1 Timothy 1:2
5. Care for his own family - 1 Timothy 5:8
6. Rufus’ Mother - Romans 16:13
7. Family dynamics - 1 Timothy 5:1

II. Leadership as Family

A. Two- Eyed Leader Concept

1. One eye on our development as children of the Father (John 14:18-24 / Philippians 3:13)
 - a. Driven..? (Matthew 7:21-23)?
Q. What is driving your development? What are your priorities?
 - b. ...or called? (Luke 2:49, John 5:19, Matthew 12:50, Acts 20:24)
Q. Is your lifestyle attractive to others?
2. One eye on the development of our children (1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 / 2 Corinthians 12:14)

III. Multiplication of Family

- A. Standards will go down in order to go up. (Philippians 1:12-17)
- B. Willingness to be surpassed (John 3:27)
- C. We all stand on family shoulders – prepare the next generation
- D. Fathers and Mothers – for life and seasons

IV. Family in Europe

- A. Monument or Movement?
- B. Isaiah 60:4 – Call out sons and daughters
- C. Classroom, apprentice, immersion.
- D. Culture / language dynamics. There is no Jew or Gentile

Suggested Readings: See Session 1 notes