



“Instead of counting Christians, we need to begin weighing them.”
Dr. Dallas Willard



January 24, 2008



Dan and Tim working over lunch at the Bagel Bin

Slow to Wake Up in Maryland

For years (many!) a friend of mine exhorted me, “Tim, ya gotta call Dan Cotter.” Finally, in early 2007, I ‘woke up’ and called.

God had used Dan to help found and grow a young adult ministry to 2,000+ folks at a large church in northern Virginia. By the time I called, Dan and his wife, Laura, had moved to northern Montgomery County to plant a new church. Even on the phone, our hearts connected regarding the mission of Jesus’ Church!

Of course, I wish I had called years earlier – yet, perhaps my timing was Providential?

We have journeyed together in these early months of Dan leading this newly formed church -- experiencing much joy and as well, some expected tough times. I have sought to enCOURAGE Dan through the whole process by bringing focus to what matters most and helping him develop a strategy for building disciples of Jesus.

Hear from Dan about the work to which God has called him:

“We sense a call from God to form a church community that is about engaging our changing culture. We do this by getting back to simplicity and what matters most: love God, love people -- the rest will follow.

We live this calling by helping people make three connections in life: connect with God, connect with others and care for people.

By focusing on what God wants us to do, we believe we can love our community and help her be more of what God desires in Upper Montgomery County.”

Please pray for the following requests from Dan and The Church UpCounty. This Church truly is loving their neighbors in some remarkable ways! --

1. Staying focused on simple church.
2. Building bridges to the people living and working in our neighborhoods.
3. Multiplying our church in small groups so new friends can journey toward God with us.
4. For the financial resources to meet our 2008 budget.
5. For us to train our leaders.
6. For our people to live life the way Jesus intended.
7. For us to pass His Life on to others.

You can ‘visit’ the Church UpCounty at: <http://www.upcounty.org>.

Sleepless in St. Louis

The opening meeting of our Navigator Conference was concluded. In my room, I lie awake in the dark. I came to St. Louis on November 1 asking God to give me focus and a renewed passion for this ministry.

"What if ... I do not hear Him speak? ... I do not gain clarity? ... I do not receive strength?" ...

He directed me during those 5 days:

"Continue as you have since age 18 -- investing in a few and helping them to multiply!" (II Timothy 2:2)

"Give yourself to young church planters, helping them to imbed a disciple-making DNA into their church from the outset!" (Matthew 28:18-20)



Jason Lampman and Paul Pope at Einstein Bagels

A few weeks after returning from St. Louis, I gathered with ministry and church leaders in Baltimore for prayer. For over a year, we had been meeting each month in a different city neighborhood, seeking God for renewal and transformation for one of America's most blighted and crime-ridden cities. What a delight to meet Jason Lampman and Paul Pope -- having recently arrived from California and Texas to plant a church, indeed a disciple-making movement in Baltimore's urban core! Speaking with them, my heart resonated with theirs. Again, I sensed God directing me, *"give yourself to young church planters"*. Further confirmation was the discovery that Jason and Paul are connected with and being sponsored, in part, by a church which was planted by a network of church planting churches with whom I had the privilege of partnering 21 years ago!

Two weeks ago, the three of us met again in a local bagel shop, discussing some of the strategy and philosophy of ministry necessary for building disciples who obey the commands of Jesus, follow Him, and learn to live redemptively as His Image Bearers in the sacred essences of life: work, family, community.

I asked Paul and Jason to share with you some of their story:

"When Jesus began His ministry 2000 years ago, He engaged the culture. Jesus went to the woman at the well, He sought out lowly fisherman, He welcomed the hated tax collector, and He ate with sinners and prostitutes. Somehow, over the years we have often lost the mission to reach out to the hurting and disenfranchised of the world. Paul and I moved to Baltimore with a dream of building communities where people are living out their faith, not just talking about it. We want to start churches (disciples, not buildings) who love God, love people, and strive to follow Jesus everyday. Through our partnership with a local church in Annapolis, as well as locking arms with guys like Tim, we are encouraged as we seek to make an impact on this city through the power of Jesus."

Amy and I ask you to join us in praying for the Lampmans and Popes as per their requests:

1. Ask the Lord to continue to strengthen our character in the spiritual battle that we face daily.
2. Ask the Lord to raise up people, pray-ers, and financial supporters to join our team.
3. Seek The Father with us, asking Him to enable us to develop partnerships with Godly organizations and people, just as we have with Tim. You can connect with us at: www.servebaltimore.org.

"For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that One died for all, and therefore all died. And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again." (II Corinthians 5:14,15)

*With Our Love,
Tim, for Amy*