**Saturation Church Planting: A Collaborative Approach**

**Study Guide**

**I. Key Concepts**

* **Saturation Church Planting (SCP):** A strategic approach aiming to establish enough churches within a specific geographical area to ensure every individual has access to the Gospel and the influence of a local Christian community.
* **Disciple-Making Movement (DMM):** A rapid and organic multiplication of disciples and churches, characterized by a focus on obedience-based discipleship, small group dynamics, and indigenous leadership.
* **Church Planting Movement (CPM):** Similar to a DMM, CPMs emphasize the rapid and exponential multiplication of churches within a particular people group or population segment.
* **Traditional Church Planting:** Denominational approaches to starting new churches, often utilizing established structures, resources, and methodologies.
* **National Roundtable:** Collaborative gatherings of church planting leaders, representing diverse denominations and movements, aiming to strategize, coordinate, and support church planting efforts at a national level.

**II. Biblical and Missiological Foundations**

* **Missio Dei (Mission of God):** The understanding that mission originates from the Triune God, who is actively involved in redeeming and reconciling all creation to himself.
* **Great Commission:** The command given by Jesus to his disciples to "go and make disciples of all nations," baptizing and teaching them to obey his commands (Matthew 28:18-20).
* **Theological Rationale for SCP:** The belief that SCP is a direct response to the Great Commission, aiming to fulfill God's will for the salvation of all people and the establishment of his kingdom.

**III. Historical Sketch**

* **Key Figures:**
* Ralph Winter: Introduced the concept of "people groups" and advocated for a strategic approach to reaching unreached people groups.
* Jim Montgomery: Founder of the DAWN (Disciple a Whole Nation) movement, promoting SCP as a national strategy.
* Donald McGavran: Provided a theological rationale for DAWN and emphasized the importance of church growth principles.
* **Key Movements:**
* World Missionary Conference (1910): Emphasized the urgency of world evangelization.
* International Missionary Council (IMC): Played a significant role in shaping missiological thinking throughout the 20th century.
* Lausanne Congress (1974): Ralph Winter's presentation on people groups influenced the development of SCP.
* **Contemporary Developments:**
* Shift from top-down to bottom-up approaches: Emphasis on organic, contextualized church planting strategies.
* Emergence of DMMs and CPMs: Demonstrating the effectiveness of rapid, disciple-making focused church multiplication.

**IV. Principles of Saturation Church Planting**

* **Priority of Prayer and Obedience:** Dependence on the Holy Spirit's guidance and empowerment.
* **Disciple-Making as Central Focus:** Emphasis on multiplying disciples who hear and obey God.
* **Empowerment of All Believers:** Recognizing the calling of every believer to participate in mission.
* **Contextualization and Indigenization:** Adapting church planting strategies to local cultures and needs.
* **Holistic Gospel Engagement:** Integrating evangelism, discipleship, and social action.
* **Local Church Responsibility:** Empowering local churches to raise up and support church planting teams.
* **Collaboration and Partnership:** Working together across denominational and organizational boundaries.

**V. Implementation Strategies**

* **National Roundtables:** Facilitating collaboration, information sharing, and strategic planning.
* **Models and Methodologies:** Utilizing a diverse range of approaches tailored to specific contexts.
* **Strategic Information Gathering:** Collecting data to identify needs and measure progress.
* **Training and Resource Development:** Equipping church planters and leaders with essential skills and resources.

**VI. Case Studies**

* **Dominican Republic:** National Church Planting Roundtable aiming to plant 12,000 churches.
* **Philippines:** DAWN 2000 movement achieving the goal of 50,000 churches by the year 2000.
* **Kenya:** Focus on reaching unreached people groups and empowering local churches.

**Short Answer Quiz**

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. What is the core concept of Saturation Church Planting (SCP)?
2. Explain the significance of the *missio Dei* in relation to church planting.
3. How did Ralph Winter's contributions at the Lausanne Congress impact the development of SCP?
4. What is the distinction between Disciple-Making Movements (DMMs) and traditional church planting models?
5. Describe the purpose and function of National Roundtables in advancing SCP.
6. Explain the principle of "contextualization" in the context of SCP.
7. How does the Great Commission provide a biblical foundation for SCP?
8. Briefly outline the historical trajectory of SCP, highlighting key movements and developments.
9. Identify and explain three key principles of SCP.
10. What are the challenges and opportunities associated with collaborative church planting efforts?

**Short Answer Quiz Answer Key**

1. **SCP aims to saturate a geographical area with enough churches so that everyone has access to the Gospel and the influence of a local Christian community.** It focuses on strategically planting churches to reach all people groups and segments of society.
2. **The *missio Dei* emphasizes that mission originates from God himself, who is actively involved in redeeming and reconciling all creation.** Church planting, therefore, is seen as a participation in God's mission to seek and save the lost and establish his kingdom.
3. **Winter's presentation on "people groups" highlighted the need for a more strategic and focused approach to missions.** This led to a greater emphasis on reaching unreached people groups and developing methods to effectively plant churches among them, contributing to the development of SCP strategies.
4. **DMMs prioritize rapid, organic multiplication through obedience-based discipleship and indigenous leadership within existing social networks.** Traditional church planting models often rely on established structures, resources, and trained leaders sent out from existing churches.
5. **National Roundtables serve as platforms for collaboration, information sharing, and strategic planning among church planting leaders from diverse denominations and movements.** They aim to coordinate efforts, pool resources, and provide support for church planting initiatives at a national level.
6. **Contextualization involves adapting church planting strategies to the specific cultural context, values, and needs of the target community.** This ensures the Gospel is communicated in a relevant and understandable way, and that the church can effectively engage and serve its community.
7. **The Great Commission, the command to make disciples of all nations, provides a clear biblical mandate for church planting as a means of fulfilling God's mission.** SCP seeks to take this command seriously by strategically establishing churches in every corner of the world.
8. **SCP evolved from early missionary efforts focused on global evangelization to a more strategic approach, influenced by figures like Winter and Montgomery.** The emergence of DMMs and CPMs, along with a growing emphasis on contextualization and collaboration, have shaped contemporary SCP strategies.
9. **Three key principles are: (1) the priority of prayer and obedience, recognizing the Holy Spirit's essential role; (2) the centrality of disciple-making, focusing on multiplication of disciples; (3) and the empowerment of all believers, recognizing that everyone has a role in mission.** These principles guide the approach and implementation of SCP.
10. **Challenges include navigating theological and methodological differences, fostering trust, and ensuring equitable partnerships.** Opportunities arise from leveraging diverse resources, expertise, and networks to reach new people groups and accelerate church planting movements.

**Essay Questions**

1. Discuss the biblical and theological foundations of Saturation Church Planting, drawing on relevant scripture passages and missiological concepts.
2. Analyze the historical development of Saturation Church Planting, tracing its evolution from early missionary efforts to contemporary movements and strategies.
3. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of both traditional church planting models and Disciple-Making Movements (DMMs) in the context of Saturation Church Planting.
4. Discuss the key principles of Saturation Church Planting, explaining how these principles can guide the development of effective strategies and approaches.
5. Explore the importance of collaboration and partnership in Saturation Church Planting, addressing the challenges and opportunities involved in bringing together diverse denominations and organizations.

**Glossary**

* **Antioch Church:** A church characterized by a strong commitment to missions, discipleship, and sending out church planters, modeled after the church in Antioch described in the book of Acts.
* **Barangay:** A small administrative division in the Philippines, similar to a village or neighborhood.
* **Closure:** The concept of completing the task of reaching every people group with the Gospel.
* **Coalition of the Willing:** A network of ministries collaborating to share data and strategically plant churches in unreached areas.
* **Comprehensive Engagement:** A holistic approach to missions that addresses both spiritual and physical needs, integrating evangelism, discipleship, and social action.
* **Discipling a Whole Nation (DAWN):** A movement promoting the saturation of nations with churches as a means of reaching all people groups within a country.
* **Echo Chamber:** A situation where individuals or groups primarily interact with those who share their same perspectives and beliefs, limiting exposure to new ideas and challenges.
* **Evangelism:** The proclamation of the Gospel message with the aim of leading people to faith in Jesus Christ.
* **Global Alliance for Church Multiplication (GACX):** A network of organizations committed to planting churches globally.
* **Gospel Saturation:** A strategy focused on creating multiple and repeated opportunities for people to hear and respond to the Gospel within a specific area.
* **Great Command:** The command of Jesus to love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:37-39).
* **Holistic Mission:** A comprehensive approach to mission that integrates evangelism, discipleship, social justice, and community development.
* **Indigenization:** The process of adapting the Gospel and church structures to the local culture, ensuring that Christianity becomes truly rooted in the local context.
* **Lausanne Movement:** An international movement connecting Christian leaders and organizations committed to world evangelization.
* **Lateral Posturing:** A collaborative approach to leadership that emphasizes shared responsibility and decision-making rather than hierarchical structures.
* **Missional Theology:** A theological framework that emphasizes the church's identity and purpose as being sent by God into the world to participate in his mission.
* **Multiplication:** The process of reproducing disciples and churches, leading to exponential growth.
* **Pivot Nation:** A strategically located country that has significant influence and potential for spreading the Gospel to surrounding nations.
* **People Group:** A group of people sharing common cultural, linguistic, or ethnic characteristics.
* **Persons of Peace:** Individuals within a community who are open to the Gospel and willing to welcome and support those sharing it.
* **Reproducibility:** The ability of disciples and churches to effectively train and equip new leaders and plant new churches, leading to ongoing multiplication.
* **Send Institute:** A gathering of missiologists in North America focused on strategizing for church planting and evangelism.
* **Small Group Ministry:** The use of small groups for discipleship, fellowship, and outreach, often playing a key role in church planting movements.
* **Sustainable Church:** A church that is self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating, capable of long-term growth and impact.
* **Target Driven:** A strategic approach to missions that sets specific goals and objectives for reaching people groups and planting churches.
* **Telescoping:** The process of expanding outward from a central point, establishing new churches that reach further and further into new communities.
* **Transformation:** The holistic renewal and change of individuals, communities, and societies through the power of the Gospel.
* **Unreached People Group:** A group of people with little or no access to the Gospel and Christian witness.
* **Vision 5:9:** A global movement working toward a church for every people and place.

This study guide provides a comprehensive review of the key concepts, principles, and historical developments related to Saturation Church Planting. By engaging with these materials and reflecting on the essay questions, you will deepen your understanding of this strategic approach to missions.