

## Helping Paint the Picture

Perhaps you are headed out on vacation this July to “see the sights” across this country or perhaps abroad. Does it blow your mind when you consider all the different places of God’s world that you have not seen? That you might never see? It can be a comfort of sorts to know that you can enjoy those sites vicariously. Perhaps someone else will visit a majestic piece of God’s creation and describe it to you so that you can have a picture in your mind without ever having gone yourself. It’s not the same as direct experience, but it can give you enough of an idea to whet your desire to see more!

At BCP, we have the privilege of seeing firsthand the fruit of God’s work that comes from partnerships with local churches across America. We often wish that all of our partners could experience this fruit firsthand, but knowing that’s not possible, we do what we can to create a vicarious experience. Sharing our stories of people being changed and churches multiplying their impact should, we trust, give you a

picture in your mind of what is happening through God’s power at BCP, and it should grow your desire to see even more fruit!



*Eric Nihart*

Eric Nihart | VICE PRESIDENT

## What's new?

- Helping Paint the Picture
- Momentum
- Momentum in Relationships
- Partnership with Givers
- The Time is Now

## Momentum

There is momentum being gained as we help churches move forward in God’s plan for this age, namely the Great Commission. One of the ways we can see momentum is through the number of new partnerships that we have with churches.

We have also seen an increase in the acknowledged need for local



churches to disciple the next generation to fulfill the Great Commission. We are meeting and connecting with individuals across the nation who are excited to go about the Great Commission in their local communities. When you think of the great parts of God’s creation that you might be seeing on a trip this summer, no matter how beautiful, it should pale in comparison to seeing the gospel being accepted by a new believer! How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel!

As we ask you to partner with us in greater ways this year, we thought it would be helpful if you could “see” the momentum. Reading the monthly Connect updates is one way to do that, but you can also subscribe to missionary-specific emails to hear direct accounts of God at work across the nation.



## Momentum in Relationships

Our ministry is unique in that we do not simply provide consultation or programs. BCP places a significant emphasis on relationships because they are critical to the multiplication process, so we provide training by building relationships.

This starts with personal connections, kickoff retreats and regular trainer meetings, but it extends to encouraging and facilitating the development of connections with other churches. We are convinced that the local church is not only the main vehicle for discipleship, but also the main resource for healthy relationships.

Relationship drift and rift can happen in churches and not only thwarts momentum but can derail ministries. Often church leaders contact us with questions on how to deal with a difficult relationship situation. Some involve people who were considered close friends, enjoying multiple meals, hobbies and even vacations together. Yet now those relationships have drastically morphed. No more synergy, no more communication, no more trust. Sadly, this is a common situation that often is glibly attributed to the “honeymoon is over.” However, it is far more serious. Our goal, at that point, is to help them respond biblically, glorify God and properly love others. These remedial coaching sessions are to help the leaders get out of a tough situation.

However, it is imperative that they also develop biblical relational culture and habits. I have enjoyed helping churches

begin this culture change through the Leadership Journey meetings, and we are seeing it gain momentum. This 24-week journey emphasizes the importance of obedience to the “one another” commands. Not only are men exposed to these relational expectations, but they also take on projects to improve key relationships. Often men become most aware of their needs as a husband or father, but these projects have also opened men to the value of improving interactions in the church. This small group format serves to create a “one another” accountability opportunity among the men.

One pastor took the principles from the Leadership Journey and created a sermon series for his whole congregation. This added another venue for creating this culture. We use the principle of using multiple venues to help churches address needed change. Relationships are impacted by larger group dynamics when the group is unified through biblical teaching, they are enhanced through smaller group accountability, and they are corrected in one-on-one encounters. The “one another” commands are also at the front of our church revitalization training. There are many “aha” moments in a revitalization weekend.

One such experience included leaders realizing that their church culture was missing some key relationship principles and processes. This led to them developing processes to help enhance that relationship culture.

We celebrate the importance of church autonomy; however, we recognize the dangers of churches being too independent. Part of our training includes a reminder of how interdependent the Apostle Paul was. He not only commanded “one another” actions; he modeled them. It is tempting to see his letters as simply instructions from an authority to a church; however, he debunks that by regularly referring to others in his letters and how much he depends on others for ministry and personal encouragement. He regularly reminds his readers that the church is bigger than them.



The emphasis on collaboration in our churches has created an exciting trend among those I facilitate. More churches are caring for and praying for sister churches. Churches are strategizing on how to work together to help other communities. I am confident that this trend will result in churches being revitalized and new churches being planted.

## Partnership with Givers

We are thrilled by the momentum we are experiencing as relationships are built and change results as relationships are mended and nurtured through the “one anothers.” We are so thankful for the churches that have come alongside us and are training and equipping their leaders to serve and minister in their local church. We are also grateful for the generous giving that we have seen from our faithful partners. We do not want to be blind to the fact that our partners help us each week by providing and praying for our Mission. We see our partners giving in greater ways which helps encourage and strengthen us, emboldening us to go and do the same to others. We pray that as you “see” the fruit from your partnership with us, that your own appetite will be whet to experience this fruit in your own life and also through your continued partnership with us, your hands and feet to God’s Church.

We also hope it points to a future state where many churches are revitalized and strengthened, making and multiplying disciples, sending missionaries, and helping other churches do the same! We trust this vision of the future will challenge you to consider partnering with us so that we can connect with more people at a faster rate.



You might be wondering, why the rush? Let’s look back at the parable of the man in Matthew 13. Here is a man who was willing to sacrifice all that he had because he knew the return on investment was going to be exponentially better, but he also knew that the time was now to invest because waiting would do no good. You might even say there would be a cost to waiting. By waiting, he could become distracted and forget about the treasure; he could mismanage his funds and not have enough money to buy the field, or he could pass away before ever buying the field.

Likewise, we at BCP are attempting to steward and manage the many churches, people and communities that the Lord has allowed us to come alongside. We know that the Lord has brought us many opportunities in the last few years that we believe will grow and develop into even more opportunities. Much like the parable of the hidden treasure, we recognize that the time is now to invest in churches; waiting will surely have costs. We want to be able to handle this second wave of momentum, and your partnership through prayer and giving will help us accomplish this amazing task. When you consider how to partner with us, have the mindset of the Matthew 13 man, thinking less about simple dollars and cents and considering how you might partner with us in greater ways- like hidden treasure ways!

## The Time is Now

Have you ever asked someone a “would you rather” question?

Often that involves proposing either two bad or two good choices, forcing the person to decide between two equally appalling or great choices. The game can inadvertently reveal motives, priorities and risk appetite that the interviewee has for being willing to accept various circumstances.

In Matthew 13 we read about the parable in which Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven with a treasure that is buried in a field. A man finds this treasure, and for the joy over it goes and sells all that he has and buys the field the treasure is located in. Now the man has the treasure. At first glance, this passage plays out logically. A man finds a treasure which is evidently of more value than what he has, so he sells what he does have to gain that which he does not. So, logically, who wouldn’t make that trade? It’s an upgrade! But what if the choice wasn’t as simple as “do you want to upgrade?” What if it read more like a “would you rather” question? For example, would you rather sell all that you have for a promise of a future better state or keep everything? The decision becomes slightly harder when we cannot “see” the end goal and when the better future state is not immediate.

It can be challenging to invest in the future when you are not completely sure what the future holds. Hopefully in this Connect you have seen the way God is working through BCP.

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36830 Royalton Rd, Grafton, OH 44044  
440.748.1677  
bcp@bcpusa.org