

[Flipping Church](#)

This 3-part class was taught by a start-up church pastor, youth minister and author, Mark Baughman. Mark runs Union Coffee, a coffee shop that doubles as a church, in Dallas, TX. His book, [Flipping Church: How Successful Church Planners Turn Church Upside Down](#) will be released in July 2016.

Mark described the new church plants that are growing up all around the country. His book highlights some of these new ministries that do church in a whole different way. These churches are reaching new people who haven't been church-goers before. Most of the new churches would be considered Young Adult Ministry, but a few are working with teenagers exclusively. Most don't look anything like church to the seasoned church-goer.

One of the new church plants is within the barbed wire and electric fences of a prison. The deacons are prisoners caring for other prisoners. The members of the church aren't an outside church coming in to "help" or "save" the prisoners, they ARE the prisoners. Another is a restaurant that teaches at-risk youth culinary skills, led by a chef/pastor. The youth learn the trade and go on to get jobs in the restaurant industry or begin their own restaurants. Another new church meets in a different bar each week, making sandwiches the first hour and sharing faith stories and a sense of community the second. The sandwiches are handed out to the homeless at noon the next day, mostly by those warming the bar stools the night before.

There is a flow to a new movement, a new church remade. In the very early church, the new movement began with Jesus and his disciples. There was a new cause, and new way of living in the time of the gospels. We can't go back to that beginning because they knew Jesus face-to-face.

The next step in a new movement is called "Possibilities." In this phase, we ask, "What does it mean to carry the movement to the next level?" This was seen in Acts and the Epistles. It is disorganized, but has great potential and enthusiasm.

Next comes the "Do's and Don'ts" that determines who we are and how we follow Jesus. This is the code we set up.

The following step is "Suffering and Growth," like the martyrs. We need to remember why we are doing this new ministry.

Then we get to "Institution." It is the stability and security part of the flow. It is a time of great expansion, like in the time of Constantine. We figure out what we believe and how we practice our beliefs.

Inevitably, we reach the "Breakdown" phase of the cycle. The church doesn't have to die, but it will look different. We must cycle back to "Possibilities," but the "Do's and Don'ts," "Suffering and Growth," and "Institution" steps will be altered, like in a parallel universe. How do we get back to "Possibilities" and not die out? We celebrate the great things that were part of the

“Institution” vocally, but we don’t need and shouldn’t try to recreate them. We acknowledge the achievements of that time, using that foundation to look at new “Possibilities” again.

Here are some tips and truisms of new ministries as shared by Mark.

1. A new church planter, like a youth group leader, has to be willing to break the mold and begin something completely new.
2. The planter and youth leader also have to work really hard to get people to come because there is a high turnover. The life cycle for every church is 10 years. It needs to be remade constantly.
3. List 3 or 4 things you are good at. Build a ministry around those gifts. It is a myth that I need to target a demographic just like yourself.
4. I don’t need to give Jesus Christ to the newcomers to my new group. My job is to nurture and love them to help ignite the spark God already put within each person.
5. If I look for God in others, they can see God in me. (Conversely, if I already know God and am a God-lover, it seems that I am better than you. Millennials (born 1981 – 1997) hate this attitude!
6. Forty – 50 people is enough. Why grow larger than that? This is enough to run service projects. More than that has a different motivating factor than mission work.
7. Create a boutique church, one that is designed in mind of who will be served. Most churches are boutique churches today, but are designed to serve two demographics - the white, upper middle class Baby Boomers (born 1946 – 1965) and Silent Generation (born 1928 – 1945).
8. The people we are serving need to be on the design team. They craft the sermon and the pastor executes it. They debrief about the past week together. If the program or service bombed, they look at how they dropped the ball in putting that together and try something else.
9. Get out of the church building and into the community.
10. Churches that figure out ways to connect with young adults have young adults that stay with the church – maybe not the original start-up one, but at a church.
11. Listen to the community leaders and people about what is needed, not just the church experts.
12. If we are creating something new, but staying in the same building, we need to make physical changes to make it different and have a fresh start.
13. Know that this is exhausting work. New church planters and youth group leaders may last only a little while. They must have a great support system at home. If staying with this work for a long time, it will take years off a person’s life due to the pressures and limited time to take care of one’s health. Expect a regular turnover every few years.
14. God created the world which was totally new. The most holy thing we are called to do is create something that didn’t exist before.

The biggest threat to the church today is the lack of wonder. We have to be overwhelmed by our great God.