



## BLP 27. 10 Years Into a Church Plant - Avoid These Mistakes

Mark Carter & Brandon Adkins

Welcome to BLP. Today, Pastor Carter interviews Brandon Adkins, his partner in planting the church, ten years ago. Brandon is Worship Pastor at Torch of Faith.

In this episode, Carter and Brandon discuss four lessons they learned over the years, that in retrospect may seem really obvious, but come from God-given wisdom based on experience.

- **Jesus over “likes”.** // When you work toward the goal of popularity, especially in the form of social media attention or “likes”, it can distract your mindset and motives from what’s important. Remember the difference from what is fleeting and what is lasting, what is world-pleasing and what is Jesus-pleasing. Whose applause are you seeking? Are you focusing more on image than substance? Sensational stories of amazing kingdom work, while super cool, are also rare and out of the “norm”. Thinking that your work has to be newsworthy can pull you away from the essential: the day in, day out loving, discipling, witnessing and pursuing of scripture. Don’t give in to the lust to feel important, **do** what’s important.  
1 John 2:16 (GNT) *Everything that belongs to the world- what the sinful self desires, what people see and want, and everything in this world that people are so proud of- none of this comes from the Father; it all comes from the world.* There can be a lot of “world” in the Church. Demonstrate excellence unto the Lord with your work ethic, your hustle. Awesomeness takes hard work and God is worthy of it, even if no one else notices. Come back to your “why”. Be humble enough to work with the resources you have (as small and imperfect as they may be), in faith, and God will trust you with more.
- **Don’t make promises with the purpose of keeping others happy.** // Proverbs 29:25 (NASB) *The fear of man brings a snare.* It’s natural to want to keep others happy, but keep in mind that they will bring expectations and sometimes mixed motives. People will look toward you to do what only God can, but keep pointing people back to God and His power. Be discerning, emotionally neutral, and patient in your decisions to reward or appoint people a position within the church. Invest in Sith robes. Watch for those seeking significance through ministry, God provides validation, positions do not. Shepherd others in their relationship to the Lord, to make sure their hearts and desires are in the right place, and that God is opening doors in His timing.
- **Wisdom, Coaching, Vision.** // Lean into these three categories and seek each of them out, you will not lose your leadership authority by doing so. Instead, you will limit your options by relying only upon yourself. Proverbs 11:14 (NASB) *Where there is no guidance, the people fall, But in abundance of counselors, there is victory.* Ask, “How else might we solve this?”, God speaks and leads through other people. Ask for advice, especially in your areas of weakness or where you might be overlooking details. Hire or find a free(ish) coach, they will provide valuable feedback



from an objective, outsider's perspective. Lastly, you are not the sole source of the church's vision. Engage your team to contribute to the vision by visiting other, bigger churches, to be encouraged and refreshed by seeing the amazing things God is doing and can/will do through their church.

- **Beware of the brag.** // Be patient when trusting others with an important position when they say they don't have to start at the bottom. Proverbs 27:2 *Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips.* Bragging is a red flag, the spiritually mature will trust God to raise them up. When you have no history with someone, let them show that they are competent at a lower position before trusting them with more responsibility and influence. Follow a distinct process so newcomers can learn culture, values, and represent the church well. On the flip side, also beware of saying no too early when you sense arrogance, that person may be good, and by starting small the Lord could refine them and you may be able to shepherd them through that shortcoming. It's important to always keep a will-see perspective and give the person a chance to show their gifts, notwithstanding the nonexistent spiritual gift of *critique*. The right to critique is earned by becoming part of the tribe, over time.