

## **Life-Giving Principles of Church Health For Church Multiplication**

**(From the Natural Church Development international study, by Christian Schwarz)**

***Multiplication:*** (parenting) Healthy disciples, groups and churches (or living beings) do not grow endlessly, but reproduce themselves. “The true fruit of an apple tree is not an apple, but a whole new orchard.” (NCD, p. 68) Reproducing next generations is the highest form of health and growth that even surpasses a church’s own individuality.

***Functionality:*** (fruit-bearing) Each ministry/church should produce discernible results in line with its intended purpose. “Every good tree bears good fruit”... “You will know them by their fruits.” (Mt. 7:16-17) Edification is the measure of usefulness of a ministry or group according to their created design.

***Symbiosis:*** (partnering) Individual ministries/congregations can cultivate cooperative relationships so the mutual benefit is greater than they would achieve operating separately. “Diversity + Unity = Empowered Growth...not monopoly or competition.) Look for win-win relationships where you love your neighbor as yourself.

***Multi-Usage:*** (leveraging) Resources used should increase the capacity for ongoing growth and development, as well as serve others directly along the way. Systems thinking and good processes allow for steady development of the group toward self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating capacities. Jesus’ show-how method of leadership training utilized the same energy of ministering to the crowds to apprentice the disciples in the field.

***Energy Transformation:*** (steering) Momentum or energy already flowing, whether positive or negative, can be re-directed to accomplish God’s purposes. “And we know God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God...” (Rom. 8:28) Like vaccinations and surfing, utilizing what is already on the move to advance God’s purposes in your generation is powerful. In Acts 8, hostile energy is transformed into holy energy by steering into God’s redemptive purposes, so that the blood of the martyrs becomes the seed of the church.

***Interdependence:*** (long-term thinking) Individual units are connected to each other within a larger system. Changes in one ministry will have ripple effects in other ministries in the church and community. Integrating the work of various sub-ministries with wisdom can spread one cause to hundreds of effects, in both the short and long terms. Structures make our values visible; likewise interdependent structures surpass the results of isolation and individualism over the long haul.