

My Experience as a Bi-Vocational Church Planter

by Mark Brown, Pastor, Watertown, SD / District Youth President

There are varying opinions concerning Bi-Vocational Ministry, and I have only my experience to offer. To be truthful it was not an easy process for me as at times I felt like “less of a pastor” or “inferior” to those who were able to spend full-time with the church work (especially peers). But it did not take long to see the blessing and the benefit to literally “working” in the harvest with the harvest.

When I started our church work at the age of 22 I did not have any financial plan or support at the time. My wife and I worked secular jobs. I went to where I believe God wanted me to be, and that was Starbucks. I was from Chicago and had never been to South Dakota. I did not know a single soul in the community. Through my employment I quickly met people of all types from Watertown, SD. I had the opportunity to talk to them everyday and be the friendliest barista they ever met.

Quickly they began to ask where I was from and what I was doing in South Dakota. It did not take long in a small town for everyone to know who I was and for me to know who they were. During my 7 years there I cannot condense the miracles, provisions, and conversions that have taken place because I “worked” in the harvest with the harvest.

So many business owners, tradesmen and others offered their help, service, and finances to fund and meet needs for our church, and building. I do not regret one bit the process of 7 years of secular employment while planting a church. This is my first year with full-time focus at the Jesus Church and could not imagine how we would have done it without my time “working” in the harvest with the harvest. Being Bi-Vocational does not have to work against you. It can “work” for you.

It's up to you.

Mark Brown