

**Biotic Principles of
Natural Church Development:
Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches
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Biotic Principle	Definition	Description	Test Question	Life Example	Biblical Example	Ministry Example
Interdependence	The decision you make in one area of church life will impact, for good or ill, other areas of church life.	Individual units are connected to each other in a larger system. Changes in one ministry will affect other ministries in the church and community.	Are the short-term & long-term effects of what I do beneficial for the development of other ministries in the church?	Ecosystem in nature	Jesus' selection of the disciples	Making a leadership decision that affects other decisions
Multiplication	For sustainable, healthy growth, like produces like.	Healthy organisms do not grow endlessly, but reproduce themselves.	Do my ministry actions contribute to multiplication or merely to addition?	Purpose of apple tree to produce more apple trees	Jesus' reproducing Himself in His disciples	Discipling people who in turn are able to disciple others
Energy transformation	Focus all energy expanded in the church on generating growth in the church's health.	Momentum or energy already flowing, whether positive or negative, can be redirected to accomplish God's purposes.	Do I work with & use the relationship energy that is part of my ministry?	Surfing—energy gets you started then waves and momentum carry you along	Jesus' death turned into victory	Celebrating small victories; resolving conflicts with a win-win result

Multi-usage	Energy spent can be re-invested to make this ministry, program or process increasingly self-sustaining.	Resources used should increase the capacity for on-going growth and development, as well as serve multiple purposes.	Do my actions contribute to the future of more than one ministry cycle?	Cycle of a tree as leaves fall, rot, & give nutrients to soil that nourishes the tree	Jesus' teaching many people on different levels at the same time	Designing facilities with flexibility to serve multiple functions
Symbiosis	The intimate living together of two dissimilar organisms in a mutually beneficial relationship.	Different ministries can cultivate cooperative relationships so the mutual benefit is greater than operating separately.	Do my actions contribute to the fruitful cooperation of different forms of ministry in the church?	Birds eating scales off rhinos for food which cleanses skin of rhinos	The church as Christ's body with different parts	Linking children's ministry and senior adults' ministry; linking worship and evangelism
Functionality	Every detail in God's creation has a specific function. Where no fruit appears, something is wrong.	Each ministry needs to produce discernible results in line with its intended purpose.	Is this action producing fruit for the kingdom of God or is it missing its purpose?	Pruning a branch that does not produce fruit	Jesus as Vine and disciples as branches to produce fruit or be cut off	Purpose, key results, & accountability for every ministry area