

Church Planting: Why We Plant

The vigorous, continual planting of new congregations is the single most crucial strategy for the 1) numerical growth of the Body of Christ in any city, and the 2) continual corporate renewal and revival of the existing churches in a city. Nothing else - not crusades, outreach programs, para-church ministries, growing mega-churches, congregational consulting, nor church renewal processes - will have the consistent impact of dynamic, extensive church planting. This is an eyebrow raising statement. But to those who have done any study at all, it is not even controversial.¹

COMMON OBJECTIONS TO CHURCH PLANTING

1. We already have plenty of churches that have lots and lots of room for all the new people who have come into the area. Let's get them full before we go off building any new ones.
2. Every church in this community used to be more full than it is now. The church-going public is a 'shrinking pie.' A new church here will just take people from churches already hurting and weaken everyone.
3. Help the struggling churches first. A new church does not help the ones we have that are just keeping their nose above water. We need better churches, not more churches.

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR CHURCH PLANTING

1. We plant churches to MAGNIFY GOD'S GLORY.

- A. God Creates for His glory (Psalm 19:1-6; Isaiah 43:6-7)
- B. God Redeems for His glory (Psalm 106:7-8 Israel; Ephesians 1:4-6 Christians; John 17:4, 13-19 Christ's mission)
- C. God has chosen to glorify Himself in and through the church (Ephesians 3:10, 21).

2. We plant churches to FULFILL THE GREAT COMMISSION.

- A. Jesus' essential call was to plant churches (Matthew 28:18-20)
- B. Paul's whole strategy was to plant churches (Titus 1:5)

3. We plant churches because we BELIEVE JESUS' PROMISE.

- A. We believe the church belongs to Christ (Matthew 16:18)
- B. We believe Christ will build His church (Matthew 16:18)

¹Tim Keller, "Why Plant Churches", published in The Movement – Redeemer Urban Church Planting Center e-Newsletter (February 2002), 1.

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS APPLIED TO OUR CULTURAL CONTEXT IN AMERICA

1. We plant churches to **REACH THE LOST.**

- A. New churches best reach the unchurched – period.

Planting new churches is the single most effective evangelistic methodology known under heaven.²

Research has confirmed again and again, the vast majority of unchurched people are reached through the planting of new churches.³

- B. New churches are the most cost-effective way to reach the unchurched.

2. We plant churches to renew the **WHOLE BODY OF CHRIST.**

- A. New churches bring new ideas to the whole Body.
B. New churches surface creative, strong leaders for the whole Body.
C. New churches may be an evangelistic feeder for a whole community.

3. We plant churches as an exercise in **KINGDOM-MINDEDNESS.**

- A. “Planting a church will ruin Grace EFC”
B. “We don’t have enough resources to plant a church”

Notes:

²C. Peter Wagner, *Strategies for Growth* (Glendale: Regal, 1987), 168.

³Lyle Schaller, cited in *Church Planting Boot Camp Manual* (May 2006), 27.